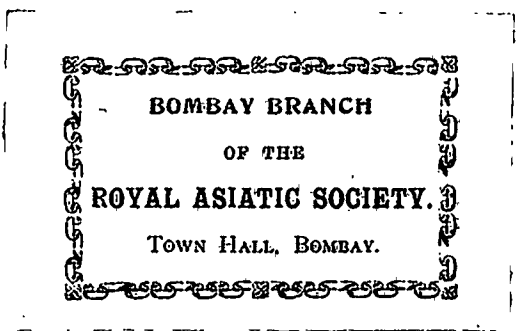

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SKETCHES

OF

FRANCE,

SWITZERLAND,

AND

ITALY.



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Printed by A. and R. Spottiswoode,
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SKETCHES

OF

MANNERS, SCENERY, &c.

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IN THE

FRENCH PROVINCES,

SWITZERLAND,

AND

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WITH AN

ESSAY ON FRENCH LITERATURE.

BY THE LATE JOHN SCOTT, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF THE VISIT TO PARIS, &c.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
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PREFACE.

In submitting to the Public the late Mr. John Scott's Travels in France and Italy, the Editor has to regret that so small a portion of the Work was left prepared for the Press. In making selections for the sequel of that portion, he has taken all possible care to exclude every thing which might wound the feelings of Mr. Scott's friends; and he trusts that he shall be found to have been actuated by sincere respect for the memory of that ill-fated and lamented gentleman.

The Essay on French Literature, annexed, was, in substance, published in a Review; it is here given with additional matter, according to the Author's intention.

Other essays and papers, found among the Author's manuscripts, have been withheld from publication, for reasons with which it is unnecessary to trouble the reader. They would afford additional proofs, if such were needed, of the generous ardour and unwearied industry in the cultivation of literature, for which Mr. SCOTT was so eminently distinguished.

SKETCHES

OF

MANNERS, SCENERY, &c.

IN THE

FRENCH PROVINCES.

CHAPTER I.

JERSEY.

I ENTERED France, this time, by Saint Maloes, from the beautiful little island of Jersey. Nothing can be conceived more interesting than this small but strong outwork of Great Britain. Its advanced situation, standing almost within the open jaws of our great enemy; the delightfulness of its romantic scenery, in which most of the charms of nature are united on a small scale, that puts every thing under the view in connected order; and the honest simple character of the native islanders, constitute Jersey

a place that kindles feelings of the most agreeable and animated kind. The principal road throughout the island is a military one, and is of comparatively late construction: the roads that existed before, are now called lanes, and intersect the island at such small distances, that there is not a spot of it which cannot be seen. These lanes are all finely overshadowed by fruit-trees; and the farm-houses, which are generally of a very respectable kind, are adorned with spreading vines. Cultivation, and the system of inclosure, are here carried to the highest degree of perfection, the islanders being obliged to make the most of their miniature territory. The horses, and even the cows, are not permitted to feed at large; this would be considered a waste of pasture in a place where every inch of ground is an important object. They are to be seen tethered to their limited spaces, and looking wishfully to the luxuriant herbage that grows beyond their allotment.

The whole island of Jersey is almost within the reach of a pedestrian excursion; wherever one goes one meets with all the usual features of nature and society, mo-

delled on so reduced a scale, and at the same time so highly finished, as to excite, at every step, an admiring surprise. The capital is a small market-town,—the towns are villages,—the villages scarcely reach to the size of hamlets. You are sunk in the silent recesses of a small valley, shut in by woods, and overlooked by romantic elevations, having every characteristic of Alpine mountains but size; the want of which, however, is not felt to reduce the general effect, because every thing is in proportion. In two minutes you are out of this seemingly remote concealment, looking down upon a town, and over an expanse of luxuriant country, terminated by a rocky shore and the wide ocean. The fortifications, some of which are perfect, and others now in progress, form, from various points of view, a noble addition to the scenery. They crown Saint Hilliers with an imposing diadem, and while the rural beauties of the island speak peace and delight, they give an assurance of strength and courage, and seem to hold a high tone of defiance, directed full against adjoining France.

The living in Jersey is both cheap and

good. French wines come over, free of duty, except a very trifling charge imposed for the sake of keeping up the harbour. Poultry is excellent, and its price low. Of fish, the island possesses most of the finest kinds. John-dory and mullet are commonly to be found in the market of Saint Hilliers. The climate is so gentle, that a number of invalids have found it answer all the purposes of a distant journey from Great Britain. A gentleman who had unfortunately cause to leave England on account of his health, lived in Jersey, in a charming cottage, with a beautiful garden, and neatly furnished, for which he paid only a guinea a-week. Fruit is good, plentiful, and cheap. The military officers who have resided in the island some time, bear unanimous testimony to its pleasantness, though I understood its society is not quite so polished and gay as that of Guernsey. The handsome houses and cottages, however, in the outskirts of the capital, and adorning the hills around it, prove that there are many very genteel people residing there.

The natives of the island speak what may

be called French, but it is of a very impure kind; few, if any of the country people, however, can speak English. Yet nothing can hurt them more than to call them, from their dialect, *French*. They bear a strong dislike towards their foreign neighbours, and an ardent attachment to the more distant country under whose crown they are placed. There is therefore little fear that France will ever be assisted by the Jersey people to become possessed of their island; and the natural and artificial strength of the place is conceived by the best judges sufficient to bid defiance to the attacks of hostile violence.

The attachment of the inhabitants of Jersey to the British crown, may, in a great measure, be traced to that consciousness of independence which they are permitted to feel, in consequence of their being left, in all matters of practical government, solely under the cognizance of their own local authorities. Their legislation exists within themselves, and is taken from themselves; and there is no other check on its regulations, than that nothing offensive to the spirit of the British constitution shall be enacted.

The happy effects of this system of policy ought to recommend its adoption in all practicable cases. The established laws of Jersey are said to be the old Norman laws,—and the people have a great jealousy of this venerable principle, and take great pride in it. The lawgivers, however, have the character of being rather capricious and peremptory in their statutes,—so that the old Norman laws are now little more than a name; and strangers are reported to be often seriously inconvenienced by the strange and harsh system of proceeding in cases of debtor and creditor, and in matters of common bargaining. A military gentleman, who went over from Southampton in the same packet with myself, asked the master, a proud Jerseyman, who was boasting of these same "*old Norman laws*," whether this sacred appellation was given to the enactments of last week,—for, by one of a very late date, his landlady had been enabled to cheat him of twenty pounds. But, on the whole, Jersey seems to be a charming place of residence: nothing is wanting to complete its natural beauties, but streams of water. It possesses none of these that can even be dignified with the

name of a brook; but there are clear little lines of water, that are here and there collected in stone reservoirs for the sake of the cattle. They are usually covered with a small building, and have a pleasing, cool effect.

Every farmer makes cider for sale as well as home consumption in Jersey. The large vats, ranged in a long building, are always to be seen as you pass their farm-yards. The cider, thus made, is very good; much better than French cider. The grapes in the island are not fit to be used for wine; at least such wine as is worth the drinking. Fruit, adapted for this, must grow in a country much farther south; which leads me to say, that much of the wine used in France for dinner is of a most worthless quality. The common wine, supplied in Paris, is good and pleasant, being brought from a considerable distance; but the produce of Brittany, of the banks of the Loire, of Orleans, &c. is harsh, crude, and poor. In the towns on the above line, you may drink wine at ten sous (five pence) a bottle, and even cheaper; but it is certainly not worth the drinking. It has been said to me by the

French, "You cannot have wine in England, but you must pay as many shillings, as here you pay pence." The reply to this is, that London porter, at five pence a quart, is in fact much cheaper than this liquor, which bears the name of wine. It has substance, strength, and of course intrinsic value. Where it is scarce, it bears a very high price. But the wine at ten sous a bottle, remove it from the places I have mentioned, would bear no price at all, for it is only by habit that it can be drank.

The church-yards of Jersey, containing inscriptions, some in French, and some in English, have an interesting character; those in English record the deaths of officers, their wives and children, who lie here remote from those most concerned in their fates. They often testify to qualities of mind, and circumstances of fortune, that powerfully excite sympathy. In general they prove, that the military life is much chequered, and that the black spots outnumber the white ones. Females attached to the vicissitudes of a soldier's duty, are subjected to many pitiable events, and the tomb-stones of Jersey present the melan-

choly evidence of their sufferings. French epitaphs are simple and artless, yet often have a rustic tenderness about them. There is *naiveté* essentially belonging to the language; and I have observed on all occasions, in France and elsewhere, that this is never more apparent than on a tomb-stone.

The distance from Jersey to Saint Maloes is about forty-two miles, in a direction south from the island. There are no packets, but small fishing vessels, that sail pretty regularly. These have but poor accommodations for passengers, but the passage is seldom long, and the fare is cheap, viz. five shillings a head. I was only eight hours on the water, and the day and the sea were delightful. In the middle of the distance, you almost touch upon a range of large rocks, that stand well out of the ocean, but are uninhabited. Their appearance is very grand, out of sight of all other land, and standing boldly up, in savage strength and gloomy silence. We had on board some old Frenchwomen, who were returning to Saint Maloes, with goods purchased at Jersey, which they intended to smuggle into France. These were chiefly handkerchiefs. The women were strong,

shrewd, and altogether well fitted for their occupation. They often had recourse to the bottle of *eau-de-vie.* When we came near the shore, they distributed their handkerchiefs among the sailors, to pass them ashore by wearing them round their necks: they then retired below to arrange their dress for the purpose of deceiving the female douaniers appointed to search them, and I believe they were successful in their devices.

CHAP. II.

SAINT MALOES.

I HAVE never seen any thing more magnificent than the approach from the sea to Saint Maloes. Several rocky islands, some of them strongly fortified, stand out in the opening of the great basin that forms its harbour. This at full tide, which it must be to carry vessels up to the town, is a most noble object. The tide sets in with a rushing impetuosity, that gives to the ocean the appearance of a tremendous torrent. It retires in the same grand way. The town, though in reality mean and gloomy, is hid on entering the harbour, behind the lofty and superb walls of the place. St. Maloes is regularly fortified, and is of very considerable strength. The battlements form the promenade, and the arrival of a cargo of passengers from England or Jersey

always brings out hundreds to look down from the stony height on the new-comers. As it is only the upper story of the houses, near the walls, that can command the fine view over them, the rent of the apartments in these is regulated upon a principle exactly the reverse of the common one. The higher you go, you pay the more, and the cheapest part of the house is the first floor.

It would require the talent of Verney, who combines the broad effect of caricature with the truth of nature, to give an idea of the ludicrous circumstances of our landing. The boat that took us to the shore from the packet, having only a few yards to row, no one seemed to care how it was crowded; men and women, and trunks and bandboxes, were heaped upon each other, clinging together for the sake of mutual support. Ladies holding by the shoulders of gentlemen, and gentlemen compelled to steady themselves by trespassing on their fair companions. On the inclined pavement that formed the point for disembarking, there were collected at least a hundred ragged boys, all of them bare-legged and barefooted, most of them without coats, and

many of them without breeches. These were crowding, and clamouring, and looking hope and fear, both together, from their wild but fine faces, as we advanced towards them. The important object was to get hold of some package to carry it to the custom-house. The custom-house officers stood in the midst of this ravenous assembly, on the watch for something contraband. The moment the boat grounded, a yell broke out, and a struggle ensued, which intimidated the most dauntless among us. It seemed, as if we were landing amidst a flight of harpies, and the spirits are never very vivacious at the conclusion of a sea-voyage. The scramble defeated its own ends: no one got hold of a trunk, because every one was trying. I believe, from all I could hear, that, notwithstanding the tumultuous and needy character of these porters, property is always safe in their hands, yet it was not easy to be assured of this, when we saw so strange a set, combating so vehemently for our things. We stood on the defensive, and they redoubled the energy of their attack. The confusion now in the boat equalled that without. Men and wo-

men tumbled over each other, and got jammed and overwhelmed. The boatmen stormed in nasal French; the boys fought, and the numerous spectators on the walls laughed and shouted; for the space of ten minutes, not a soul could land from the boat. At last the douaniers lost all patience, and began to lay about them most unmercifully with the flat side of their swords. The boys still looked forward to the trunks, as if they were totally insensible to the blows inflicted from behind: they received them on their almost naked skins with stoical resignation. It seemed as if four sous, the most that any one of them could hope to receive, were sufficient payment for a severe scourging, and a heavy burthen to boot. At last, however, they flinched a little under the application of the swords, and our things were landed while they made a momentary retreat. Many of them, however, stuck firmly to the trunks, and succeeded in carrying them to the custom-house.

The hope of having a chance, not a very good one, to share a couple of francs with three or four companions, is enough to

bring upon one a whole shoal of ragged fellows, men and boys. Six porters, some of them mere youths, but one or two of them, fine strong young men, with animated faces and easy manners, conducted a dispute about one franc, denied them of their charge, with all the earnestness and ceremony that would in England denote a bargain for a thousand pounds' worth of goods. They came back four or five times to the inn to see some of our party, different from any they had seen before, hopeful to find one of a more liberal turn than his companions. They expostulated, entreated, and argued; — they employed a tone of candour, one of appeal, and one of violated right; — in fine, they swore by their honour that they sought for no more than their due, — that they were below the mark, — that they would be happy to serve the English for nothing. Yet, for all that, we had undoubted proof that they were egregiously imposing upon us. The most remarkable feature in the case, however, was their perfect good-humour; — they never seemed to weary, — they never became sulky, — they were complimentary through

the whole dispute, — the form of it was that of a diplomatic discussion on their side. They disclaimed our imputations; they looked honesty itself against our insinuations; they smiled when we got warm, and made us a bow when we became cool again. In England, if men of this class had shewn such an interest in their demand, and had so stood to its justice, their insolence would have followed our determined refusal. But in France politeness is never violated, and good faith seldom preserved. Meeting with a lady of our party, who speaks French as a Frenchwoman, the head of the gang pulled off his hat, and, with a graceful bow, accosted her thus: — "Madame speaks such excellent French, that I am confident we shall now arrange this little affair." The franc was not given to them, for we felt it, at least, a point of honour not to recede; but a proffered compromise was acceded to. They were to have the preference of all other porters in conveying our luggage next morning, and for this they were to receive the sum which they had sworn for two hours, at one time and another, was miserably insufficient! They professed

perfect satisfaction when this proposition was closed with. In the morning they were most punctual, though the hour was five, and the payment but two francs. Four of them appeared, one would have been sufficient for the job, and in London one only would have come; but at Saint Maloes ten sous would raise a hundred people at any hour of the day or night. They marched into the bed-room without knocking, and with the precision of a regiment. Each man seized hold of something. There was a small dressing-case, that might go into a pocket, added to the burthen of yesterday, for which the two francs had been stipulated. This was sufficient for their ingenuity to work upon. They received the promised sum, but still stood waiting: — "Monsieur would be pleased to recollect there were more affairs than was arranged for." "What more?" They took up the little dressing-case. "Psha! that's nothing." The tall and sturdy fellow, who was spokesman, turned instantly round to his companions, and, with a shrug of his shoulders, said, "There is not good sense in that remark of Monsieur's."

In England a hearty *damn* would have been sent after us.

We had several more curious examples afforded us of the patient earnestness with which they pursue a mere trifle of money. You are generally accompanied through a town by a troop of ragged children, ready to fly to execute your commands, whatever they may be. We had shaken off these at Saint Maloes with some difficulty. One lingered behind the others with pertinacious attachment to our steps. At last *he* seemed also to have quitted us. Our party separated, and a lady was left alone in the streets; she wished to find her way to some particular place, and was putting her inquiries to a woman passing by; suddenly the urchin, who had disappeared, sprung up between her and the person she was addressing, as if by magic, and begged to have the honour of conducting Madame.

I was in a shop, cheapening a walking stick; a boy of fourteen, with a sharp and handsome face, came in. His object was to purchase for a gentleman at an inn, a brass hoop for his cane. The affair being important, was conducted with form and

seriousness. It caused the boy two or three departures from the shop, to receive fresh instructions from the sovereign power at the inn. At last one was selected, for which the charge made was five sous. The boy pressed hard to have it for four. The dealer refused. For twenty minutes the suit was pressed. I waited, highly amused; at last the shopman saw the meaning of the boy's earnestness. "You wish to cheat your employer of a sou." It was instantly assented to with an arch laugh. The dishonest commissionaire looked at me, and in a tone of conciliation, said, "It is but right, Monsieur thinks." The sou was still refused; but the parties separated in perfect good humour with each other; mutually touching hats; a respectable shopman to a ragged and roguish errand boy. Nor did the latter seem at all in dudgeon, though disappointed of an object, to gain which he had employed a profusion of eloquent entreaty.

At Dinan, the next town I visited, a little beggar presented himself every day for a halfpenny. The last day I had no small change, but he said he would come for it next morning at four o'clock, the hour

of our departure, and there he was, punctually at the door of the carriage. All this shews great poverty, but it also displays much cheerfulness and patience; two very valuable qualities as the world goes. A Frenchman may be overthrown, but it would seem as if he could not be hurt. He may fall, but he always falls on his feet.

We found a good inn at Saint Maloes, in the *Place*, as it is called, of the town. We were waited upon by two smart girls, perfectly French, the daughters of the landlady. An elderly gentleman, who came over with us from Jersey, told one of these, that some unripe cherries, which she put on the table, would be better when they were as old as he was: "No, Monsieur," she replied, with a significant look, "when they are as old as you, *they will be good for nothing.*"

The same gentleman gave a very complete, though short description of French manners: in a reply he made to an opinion he heard given of one of the dishes which he did not much relish. "It is not amiss," was observed by one: "No, faith, in France *nothing* is amiss." As a proof of this, it

may be mentioned, that, in this large hotel, one bed-room was allotted for a young lady, a husband and his wife. As they travelled together, it was thought they would of course like to sleep together also.

Certainly, in describing the French character, it ought not to be omitted, that they can recommend their actions, whatever they are, with the most winning style of behaviour, so as to render their intrinsic meaning of little comparative consequence as to palpable effect. A little gipsey of a servant girl ran out of our room, after putting down our coffee, giggling familiarly, and venturing a lively joke or two, as she left the company. Without shutting the door, she coolly stopped at the next room, to peep through the key-hole at a gentleman who was in bed, having had a fall from his horse. Such an action would be deemed grossly impertinent and coarse in England, and there would be no bearing the servant who would commit it; but the French girl, knowing we were all looking at her, turned round upon us, and enlisted even our ladies into the enjoyment of her trick, by one of the sweetest smiles that ever female face wore. She then burst

without warning, into the chamber of the sick man, to tell him what she had been about. In short, as our fellow voyager said, nothing is or can be done amiss in France; manners, more than things, are chiefly regarded; and they do the worst things, as some other would act the best.

The rapid and great rise of the tide here is worthy of remark. At low water, a large tract of sand appears, which, when the tide is full, is covered with forty-five feet of water. At Saint Maloes, frigates were built during the reign of Buonaparte. The town's people pointed out an old tower, where the English prisoners of war were confined: it is as dismal as strong. Standing on an insular rock, at a small distance in the sea, there is a castle of great strength, between which and the land, we were told, the British men of war often took a hasty dash, fired upon both by the batteries of the castle and those of the walls, and returning the fire as they came gallantly out. This was thought a prodigious feat by the French; but they asked of what *use* was it to incur so terrible a danger. It might be replied, that such exploits were of the greatest service in keeping up the high spirit of the

British navy; in keeping the hearts and hands of our sailors in proper readiness and temper for devoted and irresistible exertion in critical cases. A young Frenchman, who, since the return of Louis, had entered into his country's sea-service, and who, during Buonaparte's government, had been in England, and had sailed several voyages in an East Indiaman, said the French were wretched sailors in comparison with the British, the Americans, and the Danes. When ordered on a perilous or disagreeable duty, the French will argue, remonstrate, and finally grumble; sailors of the other countries mentioned, do whatever they are bid, without thought or care, except that it shall be done quickly and well. This difference may be partly accounted for by what is called the "*superior intelligence*" of the Frenchman; but vanity often takes the appearance of intelligence, and in certain cases intelligence must be very imperfect; in both it must do more harm than good. The grand principle of the division of labour, which has been so instrumental to great mechanical achievements, will be found applicable here, and to evince

the superiority of that system, by which the many are employed to act without thinking, and the few to think without acting.

There is something of pleasant effect in that familiarity which intermingles and associates classes in France; but it will be found quite as distinct a thing from real independence of condition and principle, as it is far from forwarding the discharge of those relative duties which belong to individuals, as arising out of their respective stations in society. It seems to have prevailed in France as much before the Revolution as since, which is saying enough to prove that it has no connexion with the existence of public liberty, or even with the estimation of the middle classes. It seems to be referable to causes which placed manners on the footing they held, when our old comedies were written, in which we find a valet or footman talking familiarly with his master, as the confident of his amours, and the next minute knocked down by his cane.

CHAP. III.

DINAN.

The sail up the river Rance, from St. Maloes to Dinan, is remarkably beautiful. Advantage must be generally taken of the rushing up of the tide, for if the wind be not fair, you must start with the first moment of its turn to reach your destination. The country, in this part of Brittany, is wonderfully romantic. France in general cannot be called picturesque; by far its greatest proportion is tame and uninteresting. The banks of the Loire, of which they boast so much, are very tame to an English eye. But the neighbourhood of Dinan can be rivalled by but few spots in the world. The sides of the Rance, as we advanced up it, became nobly precipitous and rocky. Castellated houses and chateaux were seen on the heights, with old-fashioned gardens, and a

countless number of windows. There were numerous ruins also, that attested the popular fury of the Revolution. One of the best of the mansions, distinguished by the beauty of its situation, had been taken by an English nobleman and family, who had here their abode while Buonaparte was last in France. As we were looking at this house, the remark was then made to us, which has been often made since, "Many of you English are fond of Buonaparte."

Brittany possessed a numerous and powerful nobility, whose family seats were all built in the form of castles. Many of these were destroyed during the Revolution, so that nothing now is more common, than to meet with fine ruins adding solemnity to the most exquisite beauties of natural scenery. The town of Dinan had lately attracted considerable notice by its romantic situation: coming up the river, you first catch sight of it, perched on high, overhanging the stream, with its decaying battlements and mouldering towers, admirably variegated, and presenting a glorious study for a landscape painter. The river here winds excessively, so that you ap-

proach and recede from this fine object for a long time before you reach it. The steeps on each side are fringed with wood in some places, in others they present inaccessible projections of bare dark grey stone, and in others they afford a scanty herbage between the rugged cliffs, which is browzed by a few sheep and goats, that are seen hanging in the air.

We landed at a bridge below the town, to which the ascent is remarkably steep, so much so, that it would seem impossible for carriages to go up and down. The walls of the town became every instant more interesting. They are very ancient, and are falling rapidly into ruin. Several detached hills near the town, have each its top encircled by the walls of a decayed castle. Winding footpaths lead down from the main road to villages amongst the rocks, and in the narrow valley below the river, now above the reach of the tide, runs its quick and reduced stream. At every fresh step, you discover a new feature of picturesque beauty: new hills disclose themselves; new rocks start up: the spires of churches and the cottages of peasants discover them-

selves, some half way up the mountains, others capping their extremest pinnacle. The numerous footpaths add greatly to the beauty of the scenery, for, on catching their zig-zag lines, a single peasant, or a boy pursuing a goat, was seen, and lost, and recovered again, and finally escaped the eye under some projecting cliff.

The town, on entering it through an old gateway, seems silent and worn out. The streets are empty, the houses are falling to pieces, no signs of trade, or any kind of the business of man. It appears to receive one as to a place of other years. In the summer months, however, some strangers resort to it for the sake of its mineral wells, that are situated in a deep valley a mile from the town, where the scenery is even more magnificent than it is in that quarter which I have attempted to describe. Never have I felt the fascinating power of nature so strongly, as on the evening when I first visited these beautiful wells. The sun was setting in splendour behind the lofty rocks, which on all sides enclosed the valley. The path that led down to it was steep in the extreme; the goats were feeding on

the shelves of the rocks; children were hunting them from steep to steep with their shrill cries; a single priest, in his sacerdotal robe, was walking slowly, with an umbrella under his arm, along a winding path, through some low wood; a feeble and bent peasant woman was ascending the hill painfully, with a white sack on her back; a dog barked at the bottom from the door of a cottage, and a black lamb suddenly started off down the rock, playing a thousand fantastic freaks as it ran, pursued by two beautiful children.

The boulevard of the town affords a fine walk, with a noble view; but the regular promenade is in the *Place*, in the centre of the town, amongst a few straight rows of slim trees: — so much for French taste. Brittany is famous for the dirty habits of its people. Amidst this fine country, the cottages are wretched and filthy beyond description. They have holes in the sides for windows, and holes in the roof for chimneys. It is said that, in the lower parts of this province, down towards Brest, the vermin are absolutely insupportable to strangers; and a whole family will be seen

sitting down to their soup round a large hole, cut out for that purpose in the middle of the table. In the course of some pretty extensive walks round Dinan, I saw only the most disgusting habitations. Yet these do not always indicate poverty. The peasantry here weave a good deal in their houses. Every room on the ground-floor had one or two looms, three or four beds, and the litter occasioned by the roosting of fowls and ducks.

In Dinan, there is not an inn that can afford decent accommodation to travellers. I do not mean accommodation calculated for habits exclusively English, but accommodation addressed to the common wants of our species. Indeed there is such a want of order, so extreme a destitution of all requisites to comfort, that it cannot be described so as to render it credible to the untravelled English reader. Yet there are in Dinan hot-baths, luxuries not known in a small provincial English town. The general system of French furnishing and embellishment, may be likened to putting a fine coat over a dirty shirt. We every where find in that country the deficiency to consist in

that which, according to the nature and fitness of things, gives true value to what is possessed in the way of ornament, and luxurious gratification. The aforementioned baths are all in a range, with plank partitions, not over-sound; in fact, full of cracks. Ladies and gentlemen take them promiscuously, necessarily hearing each other's motions as they go into the bath, and every movement of undressing. No female servant attends; but women, as well as men, receive the towels to dry their bodies from the hands of a dirty, familiar waiter.

In fact, in France, there are no needless *embarras:* it must be something very positive to put a French lady out of her way; and any thing, however trifling, is sufficient to keep her pleasantly in it. If a hedge furnishes an actual concealment from the eye, all the purposes of modesty are answered, and she rejoins her party without affectation or disorder. In England, there must be as much atonement and satisfaction to the feelings as to the senses, but it is only the latter that are addressed in France.

At the hotel (for it bore that fine name) in Dinan, there was a *table d'hôte*, but it

was held in the kitchen; it was, however, a *table d'hôte* in all its proper forms, though the major part of the company were carters. Every thing in the house was made to give way to it: the company up stairs were obliged to suit their dinners, so as that they should not interfere with the *table d'hôte.* Post-boys, pedlars, and small farmers, sat down to soup, *hors d'œuvres, bouilli, fricassées, entremets, poissons, dessert,* &c.; and the charge was brought to the level of their pockets by the indifference of the articles, and the coarseness of the strong sauces. The number of dishes, and style of the entertainment, however, were necessarily sumptuous. In this inn, with this *table d'hôte,* if you sent your boots down stairs, they came up untouched by blacking: there was a large hole in the floor of the grand saloon, through which one had a view of the kitchen below, while the steam of the cooking, the noise of the arrivals, the coquetting, dancing, fiddling, and scolding, that went on below, were free to find their way up. In my bed-room, having shut my shutters, and put out the candle, I saw a light glance up by the wall: this came from

the stable, and on looking down I saw the horses and boys, whose noise permitted no one who occupied the *best* bed-room, to sleep beyond four in the morning. Breakfast came up, one thing at a time; the milk first, then butter, then salt for the eggs, bread next, and lastly coffee. One of the eggs ordered was broken: it was brought up with the others, but on a different plate, to be shewn to Monsieur as the effects of an accident in the kitchen, for which he was to pay. The servant, who waited on the company, put her fingers into the plates she removed, and conversed familiarly with her mouth full of her stolen morsels. At times the mistress would, unbidden, join our party, and favour us with her conversation: the figures on the paper of the walls, she acquainted us, were from the *mythologie* of Ovid; and she declared that Paris was the most superb city in the world, though she had never seen it. She left, one evening, a candle burning in her store-room, which she locked after her: it was in a most dangerous situation, as we could see through the glass door. We of course sent to tell her of this, and what followed afford-

ed a fine specimen of French manners and character. She was in ecstacies of alarm and gratitude: — the house *might* have been burnt, without ceremony or request; every human being of the inn, hostlers, travellers, servants, men, women, and children, were brought into one apartment, to the dismay of the ladies, and were crowded upon each other into the store-room, to look at the beam which had been blackened by the candle. Then came a profusion of French vociferation and gesticulation, consisting of exclamation, explanation, condemnation, vindication, and execration, which burst out with a violence, and was continued with a perseverance, that soon drove our ladies to their beds.

In the morning, one of them, a young lady, was startled as she was uncurling her hair from its papers, half undressed, by the appearance of two soldiers in her bed-room: they advanced, equally unconscious of giving embarrassment or committing impropriety, and, with an air of politeness that would only in France be found accompanying such grossness of conduct. Their object was to request the passport of Mademoiselle.

She, alarmed and confused, referred them to the next bed-room, where a gentleman and his wife had to hold a conversation from their bed with the two bowing gens-d'armes, who stood by its side, as unconsciously easy as if in a drawing-room. In England no men in their condition of life would be found so elegantly mannered; and in England, no men, even of lower condition, would have behaved so rudely.

It is quite clear that the difference proceeds from an altogether different standard of manners. The quality of rudeness is not to be measured as it would be in Britain, for insult is not intended. But, as there surely are certain intrinsic properties belonging to actions, independently of manners altogether, there must be comparative superiority to be awarded to either the French or the English systems. It is of considerable importance to settle this; as establishing the comparative superiority of the two nations at this remarkable epoch of the world's affairs. That of England will be found to involve one of the most important questions that can be agitated:—namely, the practical worth of public li-

berty and individual independence. The French boast loudly of their elegance and amiability: their influence has been unbounded on the continent for the last twenty years. England has been kept to herself during that period, and what she has she owes only to herself. What, then, is the comparative state of the two nations? According to this must be adjudged the palm of national glory.

Thinking to stop some time at Dinan, for the purpose of enjoying its exquisite scenery, we enquired for private lodgings, and were referred to the house of a notary. An attorney, with a house in the first street of an English town, would be an outwardly respectable personage, well arranged in his family matters, and of seemly port: he would have a smart brass-knocker on his door, and a neat lad in livery to wait at his table; although he might, from economical motives, choose to let a couple of spare rooms. The furnishing of these would be complete and comfortable. They would contain a sofa, a pair of card-tables, a handsome dining-table and tea-table, a Brussels carpet, a smart floor-cloth, a hearth-rug,

painted chairs, nice window-curtains, and the picture-frames and the frames of the looking-glasses probably done up carefully in silver paper, to preserve them from the flies. Monsieur *le Notaire*, at Dinan, met us in the passage of his house, unshaved, and wearing an old and dirty great coat. All the women and children of the house flocked in his train, staring in our faces with eyes of eager curiosity. Every one put in his or her word, on a footing of perfect equality. Even *les petits* had much to say on the subject of our application. Their first object was the laudable one of making the most of us as strangers: accordingly, it was pretended that they did not wish to let any part of their house at all; then they would only let four rooms together — it was not worth their while to let a less number; afterwards, it was possible they might be prevailed on to let three; and, at last, finding that we would not consent to have more than two, they unwillingly yielded to let two. In the end, they entreated that we would take these two, which we declined, in consequence of the extravagant rent de-

manded for them, and the wretched state of their furnishing.

We were next recommended to *Madame*, the wife of *Monsieur l'Avocat*, as a lady who was likely to let us lodgings, and she was at the same time stated to be "*une dame comme il faut*," and of "*consideration*." *Monsieur l'Avocat*, like *Monsieur le Notaire*, met us at the door, having a piece of bread in his hand, which he was eating. As he shewed us up stairs, he betrayed in his manner considerable anxiety that we should take his lodgings; but he professed, in contradiction to his manner, that he held the negotiation very light, and left the whole affair to his wife. She came out of her room to receive us, and manifested that she was indeed a *dame comme il faut*, and of consideration, by an elegant swimming carriage. She was a very pretty woman, but of no mild physiognomy; who seemed much too young, spirited, and handsome, for the thin, great-coated, elderly figure, her husband. Let our counsellors and writers to the signet imagine for themselves how they would like to shew furnished lodgings in their houses, or even permit

their wives to do so! Yet this gentleman and lady were undoubtedly people of consideration in their province. In Paris, last year, I saw two members of the Chamber of Deputies come to a *restaurateur*, in their coach, where the price for dinner was only two and a half francs.

Madame, the landlady of the inn, was fond of talking politics. She declared that Buonaparte was a man of magnificent talent, though latterly he had lost his head. Parties, she said, were much divided in Dinan, and pretty nearly equally so. The royalists, in her opinion, imprudently irritated the Buonapartists, who bore rankling and incurable hatred in their hearts. I keep closely to the phrases which this woman used in conversation: one is quite surprised at the fine language of the French generally, of all classes. The best turned expressions may be heard coming from the mouths of the most ignorant persons. They all use a high and flowing style. "Paris," said another landlady of a country inn, "is the capital of art, of science, of taste; yet I speak but by theory, for I have never been there." According to the political creed of the mis-

tress of the inn at Dinan, the priests and the nobility were the two most obnoxious attendants of the King's return: — the former of these (the priests), I invariably found degraded, and even hated, in the breasts of every description of people. "You do not attend much to your priests in England," said one woman, "and we think still less of them here." France, according to the opinion of the talkative female before referred to, enjoyed more of trade and commerce when Buonaparte reigned than it did now: but, on the best authority, I can assert, that before his return from Elba, the affairs of France were in a far more flourishing condition under the King, than they were known to be in the time of the empire. Since that return, so calamitous for France, and glorious for England, the condition of the former country has been in every respect altered for the worse. The political system of the government, the condition of the people, the state of the finances, the state of traffic of every kind, and the ornaments of the capital, have all been mightily deteriorated. Every thing was going on well before, for public liberty and private

happiness; but the French never know to stop at the point most advantageous for them. They always lose themselves, by trying to amend their position.

In all this part of the country, I found scarcely one person, not incapacitated for military service, who had not been taken for the army. The answer was invariably, "Yes, Monsieur," to my question. A post-boy told me, that his feet were naturally too small for marching, so they took him to ride the artillery horses. On the destruction of Soult's army by our Wellington, he was left to beg his way home five hundred miles, and was obliged to sell his shirts, and at last the jacket off his back. Yet all these hardships, though complained against, do not seem to have left a corresponding sense of the iniquity that produced them, in the breasts of the lower orders of the French. The slight nature of their judgments, and the shallowness of their feelings, have caused them, in general, to be the dupes of what was called the "national glory;" and neither separation from their families, the ruin of their views in life, nor even the ingratitude and tyranny of their military

emperor, which they are ready enough to declare, can quite estrange their hearts from this man, because, forsooth, France was glorious under his sway. The short reason of this is, that a Frenchman cannot trace consequences to their true causes.

Yet the songs in the mouths of the common people, were all about the Bourbons, and had for their burthens *Vive le Roi.* To render this tolerable, it ought to be the result of a high public spirit, and a strong public feeling: but neither of these exist. These songs, therefore, only prove how small an exciting circumstance is required in France to give the people all the appearances of affectionate enthusiasm. "What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?" Why should they sing to the praise of the Bourbons? They care not in their hearts for any one of the family. It was but lately that they sung in the same style of the Emperor. The popular songs ought to speak only of what is most deeply rooted in the popular imagination and love. The common classes in England do not trouble themselves to sing of the Prince Regent. If we look to the ballads that cover the brick walls,

we shall find them all turning on events that touch sensibly the natures of those classes. A damsel is seduced and forsaken; a young maiden dies broken-hearted through her lover's cruelty; a harsh father drives his daughter's sweetheart to sea, and she is on the beach when his corpse is thrown ashore, and goes mad in consequence. In all this there is substantial meaning; the honest affections are engaged, and real sympathy attends each verse. If the poetry is bad, so much the better; for it then shows the triumph of feeling over criticism, the victory of nature over art. The Scotch and Irish songs particularly indicate this cordiality of interest: but where wooden-shoed old men, and ragged children, have nothing to cheer their labour and poverty, but *Vivent les Bourbons*, there is evidently but a light, heartless, hollow race. The finest minds are most fond of clinging to the legendary lore of their country.—Wordsworth beautifully displays this feeling in his sublime ode on Waterloo.

"Land of our fathers! precious unto me
Since the first joys of thinking infancy;

When of thy gallant chivalry I read,
And hugg'd the volume on my sleepless bed,
O, England! dearer far than life is dear,
If I forget thy prowess, never more
Be thy ungrateful son allow'd to hear
Thy green leaves rustle or thy torrents roar!"

There is a deep, rich, exquisite feeling in these lines, worth more than the whole body of French poetry. The French, indeed, are naturally incapacitated from writing or reading what is essentially poetical. What they call their poetry, is often good verse and fine sentiment; but these alone will not make real poetry. Let them compare their works of this class with the Hebrew prophecies and psalms, and they will then see what they want to make their verse poetry.

CHAP. IV.

JOURNEY TO RENNES.

Our departure from Dinan brought a concourse of people round the door of the inn. Men, boys, women, and girls, all crowded to see the English go. Our travelling equipage would have afforded much amusement to some of our English friends, could they have seen us at this moment. Three small horses, with long tails, ran abreast, on one of which rode the postillion in a blue linen frock. The *voiture* was a great clumsy affair on two wheels, and suspended more coarsely than an English taxed cart. There were two seats in the inside, the front one of which was a mere plank, passed across, the hardness of which, coupled with the violent shaking of the carri-

age, soon reduced its unfortunate occupiers to a pitiable situation. The roads to Rennes, the capital of Brittany, distant thirty-five miles, were worse than any I had ever before seen, not excepting in the Highlands of Scotland. No description of mine can convey an idea of their horrid state: indeed we, in a great measure, lost the sense of fatigue in our alarm. It seemed that the *voiture* must inevitably break down.

The country was very thinly inhabited. Not one gentleman's seat was to be seen; nor any of those appearances of opulent respectability, which denote that honourable, wealthy, and steady persons exist amongst the people, exerting a beneficial influence on the community, and acting their proper part in church and state, for the public good. The scenery was beautifully wooded; but it lost many of its finest romantic features as we got further from Dinan.

The wretchedness of the cottages is beyond all idea. None of them have glass-windows; a peep into their insides discovered miserable sheds, with dirty truckle beds crowded together in the same apartment. The inhabitants looked the cari-

catures of our representation of the French peasants in wooden shoes: yet the girls in Brittany are handsome, and the men, as we passed them working on the road, we found fine, strong, hearty fellows. We saw the labourers dining on milk and bread, which they took from coarse earthen vessels, brought with them from their homes in the morning to their place of work. Meat is never eaten here by the poor people.

One is surprised at the wretchedness of the houses of the peasantry, for at a distance they have the appearance of respectable farm-houses, being large and well built. One quarter of the size would enable those within to live comfortably; but seven-eighths of the house are allowed to run to ruin, while the family huddled together filthily in the small remainder. The French, in fact, are distinguished by a want of proper calculation; they never proportion the means to the end; they never form a judicious selection of what is within their reach, they have no management, their things are too good or too bad for their purpose. Their houses are too spacious for peasants, and too bare and dirty for beg-

gars. The expense in stone and mortar might have been one-half saved, and the saving employed in putting in decent windows and doors, such as are given to English cottages. At the inn of a small village called Chaussée, there was a long passage up stairs, leading to six apartments. One of these was open to the sky, another was half full of chaff, a third was but half floored, a fourth was empty, the fifth and sixth held all the beds of all the family; all sleeping together, male and female.

In the same way, the roads are unnecessarily large, and are never mended. They look magnificent, and are found to be wretched. Large gardens lie three quarters waste. All indicates that the country is either ignorant of the first principles of conduct, or that it has been decaying, and has got below the level to which it had once attained. If the latter is the cause, the decline of France must have been proceeding under Buonaparte, as Emperor, who, it follows, has been counteracting the promising tendencies of the revolution. They said, in apology for the bad roads, that the times had been very wretched, but they would now soon be mended.

At the aforementioned village, it seemed but too likely that we should procure nothing comfortable. But here we had a proof how well the French can make much out of little. A very small quantity of broth, which looked as if it had been saved from some feast of yesterday, was put on the fire, and to it were added a bit of cold boiled veal, a bit of previously dressed pork, and a remainder morsel of beef. A stew, which also seemed a remnant, was taken from a dish to be warmed up; and a little bit of veal was put down to roast. In Brittany, unlike the greater part of France, they roast extremely well. We had roast meat every day, as well cooked as we could have had it in England. In the sequel the dinner-table was set out with ample variety and due regard to appearances, though there was not a good dish upon it in point of quantity. The national taste for variety was however fully consulted. There were the soup and bouilli, the fricandeaux and the roti; and afterwards the ceremony of the dessert was gone through with some stale cakes, and a few cherries.

The French bate nothing of externals in any situation. They have dinner arranged

at the tables of the rich, and in the first hotels, according to the forms described; it follows also that the same sumptuous forms must be observed down to an hedge alehouse; the substantial merits of a dinner being abated at every stage, that the external magnificence may be wholly kept up. Gentlemen address each other with Monsieur, and therefore the postillions, carters, and peasants, do the same. In the Paris paper devoted to advertisements I saw a cook-maid's application for a place in a kitchen; and those in need of one so qualified, were told to correspond with "the young lady, Adele." In England, at such a place as Chaussée, the landlady of the inn would have put down but one dish of a homely kind, entreating her guests to excuse her humble fare; in France they never ask you to excuse any thing, but are always giving you occasion to accuse if you will.

As another example of that facility and neatness of expression, that distinguish the French, I may mention part of the conversation we had with our hostess here. She recollected, she said, an English carriage that had passed by her door fourteen

or fifteen years ago. "Oh, it was so beautiful! but in England," said she, "you finish every thing so much better than we do in France." Here we have good meat, good fruit, and a fine country; but in England what you do for yourselves is better than what you receive from nature."

A château, near this inn, was a remarkable and interesting object. It belonged to the old romantic château style of building, including high roofs, turrets, and numerous small windows; in short, it was exactly fitted for Mrs. Radcliffe's use. It is the property of an old unmarried lady of noble family, she is afflicted by the epilepsy, and has joined a religious sisterhood near Paris, allowing the curate of the village to reside in the house of her family. He is eighty-eight years of age, and is bedridden. He has been the pastor of this village for fifty years; retiring during the worst times of the revolution, and returning when the bitterest part of the storm was blown over. The great hall, with the large open fireplace, once the scene of feasting and hospitality, was now waste and empty. Some washing-tubs were piled in one corner.

Many of the windows had been destroyed, and through the holes were to be seen rooms closed up, and reposing in silence amongst dust and decay. The court-yard was overgrown, the walls were broken down; a large garden at the back of the house, only supplied vegetables for an old man and woman, who attended the bedridden curé. He lay in the last stage of helplessness in a remote corner of this spacious place. We heard his feeble voice, sounding faintly from his room; it gave an indescribably solemn effect to the surrounding gloom and desolation. The old man and woman spoke of him in terms of veneration, and affection. It seemed as if he had kept pace with the decline of religion in France, and was about to sink into his grave from a ruin indicating the destruction of the nobility.

A French gentleman, decorated with the riband of the legion of honour, dined in the same room with us at the inn. He was the only symptom of travelling we had seen along eighteen miles of road. We had been astonished at the total want of all signs of traffic and communication. We had not seen a soul on horseback, or in a carriage,

nor indeed scarcely a human being. The gentleman alluded to, had all the ease and vivacity of French manners about him. He paid great attention to our ladies; and, from his civil speeches to them, would turn round in their presence to joke with the postillion about his wife, in terms of freedom, such as no well-behaved Englishman would permit himself to utter before respectable females. He corrected us when we spoke of a piece of twenty francs under the appellation of a Napoleon. He said, "We no longer, thank God, recognize that name in France." I found, however, that in Paris, in particular, it still retained the forbidden title, in the transactions of business. The winter, he said, was as cold in Brittany as in London; but this, I think, may be doubted. If so, they must be very wretched here during the cold weather, for their houses, and the manner in which they are regulated, are exceedingly ill adapted to keep out the winter. No window or door shuts closely, and the large chimneys admit as much cold into the room as they disperse heat through it. In our hotel at Rennes, the windows, when shut, left a hole to the

open air, of the size of two inches at least. The season here had been as backward as in England. Our old landlady said, in the usual high style of familiar remark, which I have before described; "Months roll on, but nature does not advance." Yet there was clearly a geniality in the air, which is but seldom experienced in England; we could sit, without inconvenience, at open windows. In fact, the customs of the inhabitants in their houses, prove this. The general custom will always be found grounded on experience. They clothe warmly, however. The last advice given to my wife, by the girls of the inn at Saint Maloes, was, "Clothe yourself well, Madam: France requires it: here we never leave off our woollens."

There are no grapes in this part of France, but plenty of apple-trees. The country is covered abundantly with corn, pasture, and wood. The oxen and cows run very small. The mutton is good, but not reared with that care and to that perfection which we find in England. An English grazier would have great contempt for the method and produce of this part of

farming in France. Mr. Birkbeck's statements in regard to French farming, so very favourable to it, are about, I believe, to receive a decisive refutation, which will probably be out before this volume is submitted to the public. All practical men agree that agriculture is much behind in France; that the coarse and imperfect practices of the old system are obstinately adhered to. This opinion has been expressed by the great majority of writers on the subject; and Mr. Birkbeck's espousal of the opposite side, is founded on such evident partiality, and is so directly hostile to palpable facts, that it cannot stand. There is no attention paid in France to feeding, cross-breeding, and all expedients suggested by scientific knowledge, to improve sheep and cattle.

In the course of our journey we observed that almost every house had an oven built adjoining, but detached. On the road to Rennes from the village where we dined, we met a priest returning from visiting his parishioners. He took off his hat to us, and seemed anxious to speak. We found he had been in England, and thanked us with looks of sincere and friendly gratitude

for the asylum our country had afforded to his brethren. The day was showery, but the weather produced fine effects of light and shade, and showed a beautiful country. We now met more travellers. They were chiefly on horseback, and one could see, in the way they were equipped, proofs that riding was the chief method of travelling in this country. The horses bore about them conveniences for carrying a large quantity of clothes, &c. and the rider was generally seen with a pipe in his mouth.

About half past six we arrived at Rennes. Its immediate environs testified more in favour of its animation, and respectability, than those of any other place we had seen in this part of France. Large and showy buildings are interspersed among the trees that thickly cover what had now become a very flat country. To be sure these houses are not to be judged of by the magnificence of their distant appearance. He who would do this in France would be sadly deceived; but the general effect was good. The road had been very good for the last four miles; the small inns had become numerous. One is astonished on observing with what ap-

pearance of ease the small rough-looking horses in France bear long journies for a succession of days together. Two of them will drag a heavy carriage, laden with passengers and luggage, the distance of forty miles a day for a week together: and at the end of each day's work they come in as fresh as when they set out.

CHAP. V.

RENNES, THE CAPITAL OF BRITTANY.

RENNES is the capital of Brittany, and a city of considerable size and consideration. It bears a high estimation in the opinion of the inhabitants of the province. Every Frenchman seems to feel his own renown inseparably connected with the glory of the capital places in his country, and the attachment and pride with which he regards the public edifices of his province, are finally concentrated in the feeling with which he contemplates Paris. We were often told in the course of our journey to where we had now arrived; "Ah, wait till you see Rennes! Then you will be rewarded for coming from England." Yet Rennes is, in its greater part, extremely shabby and dirty: a Frenchman, however, would not be able to comprehend how any person

could prefer the romantic town of Dinan, to a city where there are spectacles, and a large market place, a botanical garden, and a hall of justice.

The Parliament of Brittany took a distinguished part at the commencement of the Revolution, in opposing the exactions of the sovereign, when made independently of the sanction of his parliaments. Up to this stage the Revolution went on well, and the king's disposition was such that all might have easily terminated in his reigning over a free people; a glory far greater than is awarded to his predecessor Louis XIV., the great corrupter of the French government, and the destroyer of his species. But horrors ensued, in the course of which the parliaments, and the individuals who composed them, fell victims to the national madness, which originated in their legitimate opposition.

The old palace of the parliament of Brittany is now the abode of the courts of justice, civil and criminal. At the time I was there, a good many prosecutions were proceeding against political offenders. The upper part of Brittany is far from being

well affected at present. It was noted for the strenuous loyalty of its higher classes in the Revolution; but this was met by an equally zealous spirit of republicanism amongst the common classes. Hence this part of the country is covered with ruined châteaux, and many signs of the ruin that fell upon the nobility. In the lower part of Brittany, down towards Nantes, the public opinion is quite in favour of the king; even to that degree of devoted attachment, which existed in the breast of Scotch clans for their chief. Of this they give a remarkable and convincing proof, by accepting the old depreciated money of the French monarchy, at the value it had before the Revolution, though, in other parts of France, the half-crowns of this description lose four sous each. Some severe sentences were passed by the court at Rennes against several persons, chiefly labourers, convicted of seditious cries. I saw the pleadings going forward in one of these cases. The advocates spoke with much coldness on both sides; there was no crowd of spectators, and a dull carelessness and monotony characterized the progress of the process.

Our postillion took us to the Hôtel des Voyageurs in Rennes, assuring us it was the best. We had been recommended to the Hôtel de la France, but we yielded to the man's advice, though we knew very well he had a private interest in giving it. The first appearance of things at the Hôtel des Voyageurs alarmed us very much. The "*grande* salle" was wretchedly dirty. Two great filthy fellows, in beastly jackets, breathing all sorts of stinks, presented themselves as officiating in the double capacities of waiters and chamber-maids. They made the beds, adjusted the ladies' chambers, and brought up the dishes at dinner, in hands that did not in any way recommend their contents.

As they conducted us up two stairs of this large and externally magnificent building, we found every step besmeared with gross nastiness, and we were introduced through a dark passage, and one of their own bed-rooms, into the apartments allotted for us. Their walls, and particularly those of the two bed-rooms, were stained all over with spitting. This, however incredible it may appear, is a common practice in

France. The back of every bed, even in the first rate hotels of Paris, gives this beastly evidence to the coarse manners of its occupants. In fact, a Frenchman seems to consider spitting a gratification, and its frequency an accomplishment. He always makes a display of it; and he spits against his wall as readily as into his handkerchief. Our rooms seemed quite removed from all communication with those who were to attend on us. There were no bells to be found in them: the yard below was large, and our distance from it great. We loudly objected to our situation, and requested to know how we should contrive to convey intimation of our wants to those who were to supply them. The dirtiest of the waiters had every thing to say for the place. There was a superb salle below: the chambers were *bien propres*, and our wishes would in every case be anticipated; but in case, by any accident, it should happen that Monsieur might have occasion to demand any thing, he would have the honour to shew Monsieur how to signify his pleasure. He accordingly led me out, with an air of self-approbation, and with asurances of giving satisfaction, through the dark pas-

sage, past his truckle bed, into an open gallery, looking down into a stable yard: having placed me close to the door of a detestable Cabinet d'Aisance, to which men and women resorted, though the door was formed of open rail-work; he exclaimed, "Voilà, Monsieur!" He then informed me that I only had to hollow Garçon, down into the yard, which cry they were *very likely* to hear, provided they did not happen to be out of the way! This explanation failed to give the satisfaction, upon which he had so confidently reckoned. We declared ourselves bent on trying the Hôtel de France opposite. He reiterated and ejaculated his assurances, that we would find every article commodious and clean, and him and his companion attentive. Nothing can go beyond the persuasion and confidence of their *talking*: they seem so perfectly at ease as to the strict veracity of their declarations; they are so sure of gaining their point; so certain of commanding satisfaction, that they persuade you against the evidence of your senses. They have also a persuasive tone of candour in the midst of their earnestness, and an attitude and expression of astonish-

ment that they should have their words for a moment doubted, that seem dictated by the very simplicity of truth. Moved by the waiter's asseverations, and shrinking from the unpleasantness of leaving a house that we had once fairly entered, and the trouble of moving our things, we consented to stop where we were, and it is but doing the men justice to say, that they did all they could to fulfil what they had promised. They were always on the alert, and neglected all other business to be in almost perpetual attendance at our door. This, however, rarely follows such assurances: you are usually left, as a matter of course, to bewail your credulity. At the conclusion of our stay in the Hôtel des Voyageurs, the dirtiest waiter, who took an evident ascendency over the other, acting on all occasions as spokesman and director, came up to us with looks of conscious triumph, and said, "Have you not been well served?" We confessed we had been agreeably disappointed. He thought this an excellent opportunity of giving a blow to the rival establishment opposite: "Ah," said he, "how lucky you are in not having gone to the Hôtel de la France!

you would have had no attendance there, and would have been half poisoned with their cookery: besides, they are great Buonapartists, and belonged to his Federés." I asked if the town was a Buonaparte town! "We have not many Buonapartists," he replied; "but such as we have, are very bad."

A number of English, we understood, were settling in Rennes. Provisions are cheap, and the country pleasant. It is, however, out of the way, and will never be so attractive to the English as Tours. An appeal has been made to the patriotism of my countrymen, as an inducement to remain at home, to distribute their means in the midst of their native land. But on this ground, I should think, such an appeal is not likely to be attended with success. Scarcely even the Prince Regent's fêtes, intended for the same laudable purpose, can be expected to have much effect. People may regard with horror the commission of an act directly levelled against their country's welfare; but they are scarcely likely to reason so far into consequences, as to be convinced, that mere omission to do her good is the same species

of crime. A subtle appeal, therefore, to their patriotism, to prevent their consulting what they think to be their own interests, by travelling, will not prevail over this conviction. So long as they feel they can mend their situation by going abroad, they will go.

The emigration of the English to France, certainly causes much exultation in the breasts of the inhabitants of the latter country. It gives them all the consolation they require, for the disgraces, losses, and mortifications inflicted on their nation by England; and, as is customary, they impute the fact over which they triumph to the most extravagant and absurd causes, calculated to feed their vanity and revenge. I heard it said by a Frenchman, who held that station in society which ought to have insured him better information, that a law had passed in our Parliament, prohibiting emigration after a certain time, under a penalty of half the offender's effects. An officer at Angers affirmed, that he knew it as a fact that one-quarter of the population of Great Britain had emigrated, some to France, many to America, and numbers to

Germany. We were often advised seriously by our French friends, not to think of returning home, for England was certainly entering into the horrors of a furious revolution. This gave one occasion to read them a lesson on the difference between a French and English mob, and to tell them how differently and much better founded was the security of our country, in comparison with theirs.

In my opinion, however, the emigration in question, though not likely to be stopped by appeals to patriotism, nor, I should hope, by any compulsory law, is far from being an evil that ought to cause a deep alarm. It is, at the worst, but a temporary inconvenience. It will not last, and the discontent generally expressed by the emigrants gives an assurance of this. Two years, at the most, will cause it to die a natural death. People in general can only leave our island, to be made to feel its value, and the expediency of returning to it. Their views of economy will not be fulfilled: prices in England are getting lower, those in France are rapidly rising. A vagabond life is not a pleasant one, after the first freshness of

novelty has worn off, and the disgust occasioned by French manners, according to the taste of by far the greater number of British travellers, will not wear off by habit, but become stronger and stronger through experience. The reason of this is, that it is not founded in prejudice, but in truth. The advantages of France are not of that class which in England is thought most indispensable, but her deficiencies lie amongst those which no English person of decency will confess to be being able to do without. Elegance France has got, but people can live comfortably without elegance. Plenty she has got, but people can even be happy without plenty. Amusements she has got, but dulness may be expelled without amusements. Gaiety she has got, but cheerfulness may exist without gaiety. What she has not got, are precisely those things which no well regulated opinion would treat as indifferent. They are what the ploughman would profess he felt as necessary for his happiness in his cottage, as for the prince's splendour in his palace. He would say, in language of disdain, (no matter with what sincerity, it affects not the

argument), I can dine well without ragouts, and without wine; I can feel contented without pictures, or seeing statues; I can manage to rest myself without sofas, and to shave myself without mirrors; but I should be miserable without a clean fireside, without the observation of decency, &c. These latter, in which England is so rich, belong to a class of public possessions that indicates the last effects of the process of public refinement. "It is not very easy fully and clearly to define the wants which they address; but what is, strictly speaking, refinement, is in itself inexplicable; and in proportion as it is inexplicable, the cravings which it engenders are stronger and more intense. The things that appease these cravings are not to be found in any regular inventory of what is wanted to gratify the senses of mankind; they are not to be found in a bill of fare, or in an upholsterer's card: they may therefore be said, in one respect, to have no substantial existence. But their powerful effect on the mind denies this; they can of all other necessaries be the least done without.

It is in these, as I have said, that the

French are grossly deficient; and hence it follows, that, with all their boasting of superiority in accomplishment, they are far behind us in the highest species of accomplishment. They do not partake at all of the very essence of refinement, which is a subtle spirit. They only know it in its material and tangible results. Those that are undefinable may be ridiculed, calumniated, and denied; but those who know them prize them. They are like the genuine beauties of poetry — who can feel them? *They are despised and rejected of men;* but the contempt and the rejection spring from cold poverty of heart, and miserable blindness of eye.

I repeat, therefore, that the emigration that has given so much alarm, need not have done so: it is but the temporary effect of a curiosity tempted by the opening of the continent, and pretending to itself prudential considerations as the excuse of its gratification. England is the only place for Englishmen: every change from it is for the worse. Those who leave it wander, — they do not live. They are every where out of it restless: they do not find a resting-

place for their feet, and they must soon return to their ark.

Rennes has but few of what are commonly called sights. There is a botanical garden here, which possesses but little title to particular description; and there is not a church in the place, of striking architectural magnificence. The principal one is still bare and defaced, in consequence of the revolution. Every where in France the effects of this terrible convulsion are seen in destruction, outrage, and brutality: few, indeed, by comparison, are those amendments of public condition, which would afford the lover of his species consolation for the coarseness of the means employed to bring them about. The French people, at that time, seem to have been animated by no feeling but a desire of general destruction. With all that existed, existence was a capital crime, sufficient to condemn it to live no longer. Their animosity was that of a vain, ignorant people, against all that had not been done by themselves: they could not bear to be beholden to their ancestors; they felt no pride in the past, because they had no hand in it. The

fine sensations of the heart, that arise in the better specimens of human nature, when we contemplate the root from whence they have sprung, are not felt by a Frenchman. This is another proof that he is totally ignorant of the ideal, and that he can relish and understand only what is grossly material. He cannot see or feel what is not under his hand: he must touch to become acquainted — he must be personally concerned, to have any personal interest.

Since the affair of Sir Robert Wilson, English travellers have no longer any peculiar courtesies shewn to them. In this respect I found a great difference since I had been in France in 1814 and 1815. On these occasions, to have the appearance of an Englishman was a sufficient passport; but now, forms of every sort, imposed by the authorities, were strictly enforced on all alike, without any exemption in favour of our country. If there was any exception shewn to the common custom, in respect of our treatment, it was to behave to us with more of strictness and severity. Our passports had been made out in London, for

Saint Maloes. We neglected to shew them there, and were, in consequence, stopped by the police. This affair cost us much more trouble than we at first expected. We thought it would be regarded as a trifling irregularity, which would be passed over after some official correction of it had been made. But it was treated at the bureau of the police as a very serious affair. We were referred from one officer to another, and were plainly told that it was in their power to commit to prison any persons travelling in France with passports that had not been seen and certified at the place for which they were made out. It was not very easy to hear this sort of threat without irritation, unaccustomed as we are in our country to any such restrictions on travelling. At last, we were under the necessity of demanding their final decision — whether we were to be sent to prison, or allowed to proceed on our journey? After further consultation together, our passports were certified as from Rennes, and we were permitted to leave the place. We heard at the inn, that the police had got scent of some political offenders, and were at this moment peculiarly cautious.

We were obliged to leave the carriage in which we had travelled to Rennes, it being so very fatiguing, in consequence of the wretched manner in which it was suspended. Our postillion tried all means to evade this. At first he took the high tone of right, and affirmed we were not at liberty to leave him till our journey was completed. There was a special proviso in our bargain, as he knew, that we might terminate it when we pleased. Finding that we were not thus to be imposed upon, he lowered his tone, and hoped he would be *permitted* to take us forward. The roads, he said, would now be good; the carriage was really easy, though we unaccountably mistook it for a hard-goer. As we did not soften, he tried to work on our cupidity: we would not find so cheap a conveyance in Rennes. We replied, that we hoped to meet with a better one. His last resource was to beg leave to procure another carriage for us. We agreed to this, telling him that we could ourselves have one at the door in an hour, and therefore we expected that his should be in readiness in the course of two. To this he solemnly engaged himself. When

three had elapsed he made his appearance, with information that we could not set out that day; his friend's Berlin was not in travelling order. We remonstrated, and asked why he had not told us this in time to have sought for one for ourselves: — his reply was, that no one could be procured sooner. This was a gross falsehood, and is given as an instance of the obstinacy and dishonesty which this people mingle up with their politeness. With the man, whom he introduced to us in the morning, we made an engagement that he should take us to Angers on the Loire, and that the journey should be performed in three days.

CHAP. VI.

JOURNEY TO LAVAL.

The place where we slept the first night, is a small village, called La Gravelle. On the road hither our passports were examined at every post-house, by a gendarme, stationed for the purpose of examining travellers. This was another indication of the strictness of the police in this quarter. The country became again highly beautiful and rather romantic. The villages seemed to improve; but the habits of the people gave no proof of improved cleanliness: we frequently saw the peasants, at their doors, freeing their heads of vermin. One old man was combing them out on a bellows, and was apparently killing his thousands.

Vitré, a small town, at which we dined, bears all the signs of antiquity, having, to all appearance, remained stationary in condition for the last five hundred years. Its

situation is romantic, and its venerable buildings highly interesting. The shops in the market-place, are under a sort of piazza, formed by the projecting first stories of the houses, which are supported on wooden pillars; like those I have seen in some of the old towns of Scotland, having a primitive venerable air with them. This place seemed removed from all the world: it looked as if it had not moved with society, and existed but for itself. A dead silence pervaded its narrow streets: scarcely a living object was to be seen in them; not a face at a window. The articles to be sold were chiefly striped woollens and stuffs, for the dress of the peasantry, with the common eatables. How different must be the associations in the mind of an inhabitant of such a town, from those of one who lives in a large capital. The life of the former may be compared to a stagnant pool; that of the latter, to a rushing torrent. Our party broke in a little upon the repose of Vitré, by the curiosity which it excited in walking through the place.

We went to see the fine castle of Vitré. It is in ruins, the rooms having been de-

stroyed in the revolution; but the walls and towers are magnificent. Its ditch is large and deep; it stands upon an elevation of rock, and looks down upon the lower town from a great height; while the view it affords of the country is highly beautiful. The elegant *salon* had been entered by a flight of stairs. There was a large and fine suit of rooms below the level of the castle-yard, with windows looking out upon the lower town; the stairs to the *salon* were destroyed; its gilded walls were blackened with fire; the beams that supported its floor had tumbled into the rooms below, or hung over them in a broken and threatening state. Even the towers of stupendous strength had suffered. The walls they could not hurt; but the stone floors were broken in, and fire had been used here; so that the undertaking of ascending to the top of these grand buildings, was attended with considerable danger. The yard of the castle bears the most imposing look of antiquity. It has the profound draw-well, the arched gateway, the watch-tower—all the finest old style. The Prussians had bivouacked here, and occupied the few

lower apartments that are still defended from the weather. An old woman resides in a small porter's lodge, close to the drawbridge, who shews the ruin to strangers. She was moved to tears when she described the place in its pride and splendour, which she had seen. She was on the establishment of the castle in her youth, and recounted the horrors of its fall with strong emotion. The destroyed rooms were converted into a revolutionary prison; and the kitchen was destined for those condemned to die. Some of the unfortunate family to whom it belonged, were here held in captivity; and from hence were taken to the place of death. While our guide was describing these things, she spoke in a solemn whisper, as if surrounded by the state of past days, and overheard by the spirits of her murdered masters. In one strong room, near the outer gate, the police confined a mischievous madman; and his howling execrations, directed against the visitors, whom he heard near him, mingled themselves with the old woman's sad story, delivered in a low tone of voice, thus producing an indescribably awful effect. It brought the

contrast between the present and the past with almost overpowering force on our feelings. We left the place, very much struck with what we had seen and listened to. Among other things, we were told, that some part of the family, now re-established at Paris, was suspected to have lately visited the ruins of the superb possession, *incogniti.* They walked through the decayed *salons*, and stumbled over the fragments of their glory, with looks of melancholy grief; and, on going away, a young man gave a handsome donation to the aged porteress. She has since had good reason to believe, that this was the lord whose infancy she had nursed. She wept bitterly as she told us this; and declared she would have died consoled for all the past if she had but known him, and could have kissed his hand. It is in feelings and sentiments such as these, that our nature shews its richness. In striving to rise above them, as weaknesses, what do we but fall back into poverty and blunders? Man is made for his sphere, and cannot ascend above it, but to be precipitated to its very bottom. The French have stripped their country of its finest

ornaments, and most grateful invitations to reflection. Its cathedrals are dismantled, its castles demolished, its châteaux outraged: society has been reversed without being improved; and, if errors have been exploded, crimes have unfortunately taken their place. The French revolution will be to all ages a vast blot, and a hurtful influence in human history. It began in wanton violence, which was succeeded by insanity, and ended in chains. Its remembrance will impede the progress of improvement, by alarming some and irritating others, against trying experiments that may have such calamitous and wicked results. Yet the people against whom this serious charge lies, have caught neither modesty nor caution from their disgraces: they are still as light, as confident, as insolent, and as rash as ever. To reduce them to their proper low level, is really a moral duty; for this alone can reduce the hurtfulness of their example, and, in some measure, obliterate the stain they have affixed on the character of mankind.

We proceeded to La Gravelle after dinner, and found it impossible to procure more

than one bed-room for the whole party! There were five beds put for general accommodation in one room, where supper was also served up. The people of the house could not imagine how the ladies should feel any uneasiness at this arrangement. It was quite beyond their comprehension that there was any indelicacy in the matter. It was quite a common thing they said.

La Gravelle is a small village, and the country around it is pleasant. As some of our travellers were invalids, we had given strict orders over night to our postillion, not to disturb us before eight in the morning, for by starting at nine we had plenty of time to reach Château Gontier, our place of destination for the second day, at an early hour of the evening. He objected to the hour as too late, and wished us to start at six. We adhered to our original orders, however, and now, knowing something of French obstinacy, reiterated them most positively. He assented; nevertheless at five o'clock I was awakened by him, standing in the middle of the room amongst all our truckle beds. (Our door did not admit of fastening.) He was ordered angrily to get

about his business, eight being the hour appointed: he retired but to appear again at six, and again at seven, on which last occasion he was turned out of the room by force.

I took a walk alone in the fields before breakfast, and had got to some distance from the inn, when, on crossing over a style, I turned my eyes back on the pathway, and saw two gendarmes coming briskly after me. I turned and met them. They inquired, politely enough, for my passport. I told them it was at the inn. They said I was their prisoner until they had seen it. I replied, that, as my imprisonment would only last during a walk across a pleasant field, I could have no manner of objection to *consider* myself their captive. I proceeded towards the auberge with these men, one before and one behind me. All the village, men, women, and children, was out to meet us. An alarm had evidently gone about, that a stranger was walking, very suspiciously, by himself, in the retired fields. This was enough to indicate a conspiracy in their imaginations. The passport was found to be regular, and the gendarmes bowed

and departed. If its original informality had not been rectified at Rennes, I should have here been in a very unpleasant situation. This strictness seems, to an Englishman, extremely obnoxious; but it was always existing in France, and never more severely than during the republic and under Buonaparte. Even at this unsettled moment, I was told, so many precautions are not used as under the imperial government; and, since the time when the king was first restored, up to the time of Buonaparte's return from Elba, greater indulgence and liberty prevailed in regard to travelling, than had before been known in France.

Lavalle, a large town, was our first stage from La Gravelle. On arriving here, our postillion told us that he could proceed no farther with us; that we must procure another carriage to proceed to Angers, and that he would be paid half the sum stipulated with him for taking us there, though he was some miles short of half the distance. We soon found that he had never intention to fulfil his agreement; he lived in fact at Lavalle, and was only anxious to have passengers back from Rennes, being engaged

to convey some people from the fair of Lavelle, which was held on the day we arrived there. This accounted for his anxiety to get us off so early from La Gravelle, which before seemed quite inexplicable; and, we afterwards understood, that, by refusing to move before nine o'clock; we had very materially impeded his *honest* plan. We appealed to his positive engagement to take us to Angers; his reply was a smile, and "Ce n'est pas possible:" nothing else was to be got from him. Our dispute collected at least two hundred of the market people around us in the streets. All through France it happens that people meddle themselves most familiarly with your business, whatever it may be, and if it is transacted where they are present. It is impossible for a stranger to ask even a question in the street, without being instantly surrounded by a crowd. The present altercation was of too serious and vehement a nature, not to collect an ample congregation; and, as we felt ourselves rather embarrassed by having such a difference in so strange a place, we were not altogether disinclined to hear the opinions of the town's

people and farmers on the affair. Then began a warm discussion amongst the French, and as by far the great majority were on our side, the postillion clamoured with them most vociferously, while they attacked him in the same strain. Fortified in this support, which could not be but impartial, we refused to pay the money he demanded, but told him he might decline going further if he pleased. As, however, he had broken his engagement, we were determined to pay him but one third of the sum for which he had agreed to take us to Angers. He stood guard on our trunks, hindering them from being taken from the carriage until his demand was complied with. There was no way then left but to apply to the police, and we accordingly sent the waiter of the inn for two officers. A commissioner of police and a gendarme soon arrived. They first heard our story, and afterwards the postillion's, and their decision was, that we could compel the man to proceed to Angers. The fellow appealed to the "*Juge de paix*," and to his house we were conducted. Instead of hearing the cause in a room, he came to us in a yard,

and his appearance at once made me tremble for the decision, for I felt how unpleasant it would be to be defeated. He had as much of the look of a black-guard as I have ever seen; he was dressed in the style of the lowest turnkey of Newgate, and, though there were ladies present, he shewed the state of his feelings towards the English, by not even touching his hat, which is so very common a civility in France. I whispered to one of my companions, that I was sure we would lose our cause, and that I thought the only way now was to retire with dignity, which might be done by informing this French justice of peace, that his manner and appearance had already convinced us that we were wrong—*in coming before him*; and that we declined putting him to any trouble, being rather willing to pay the rascal what he asked. It was thought, however, that this might be acting rashly, and we accordingly entered on the merits of our case. We were first permitted to address the ill-looking magistrate; the postillion followed. His speech perfectly astonished us. I may safely, and without the least exaggeration say, that there was

not a word of truth in it from beginning to end. Nay, his statement of facts, as he called it, had not a foundation in fact of any kind; it bore no sort of affinity to the truth. It was all his own, and it was volubly delivered, in a tone of ease and candour the most provoking, and at the same time astounding to us. We heard a story in which we were conscious that we had no earthly concern, yet it was applied to us before our faces; and we were even appealed to in persuasive, moderate language, and with civil gestures, to acknowledge the fairness of the specious rascal's narrative. We could only affirm to the judge, upon our honours, that the tale was throughout false, and offer our oaths to the facts we had stated. He replied, that it was not usual to administer oaths in such cases; that he saw no reason to disbelieve the postillion, but strangers often gave a great deal of unnecessary trouble, through not knowing the customs of the country through which they travelled; that the sum was altogether a trifle to the English, who generally described themselves as very rich: he finished by adjudging us to pay the

fellow's charge! Against this we loudly protested, urging that the words of three or four travellers, bearing the external appearance of respectability, ought to be permitted to outweigh the unsupported assertions of a postillion; and we repeated our desire to be put to our oaths, as our judge did not seem to understand the worth of a gentleman's word. His former decision was obstinately and sulkily repeated, without his condescending to explanation or argument. I then apologized to him for our perseverance, stating, that his *costume* had not at first convinced us that he stood in the sacred character of a judge, and that we would now be glad to know if he were judge *sans appel*. He exclaimed, "*Oui.*"—"*Pauvre ville!*" was our last rejoinder, and with it we took our leave, while he bawled after us, that he would send us to prison if we did not take care.

Rather than put ourselves to farther trouble, and incur the risk of farther degradation, after so bad a specimen of French magistrates, and the mode of their administering justice to strangers in France, we thought it best to get rid of the matter

altogether, by submitting to the imposition, in preference to seeking redress at the hands of the superior authorities. They might have been swayed by the decision of one of their number; and his declaration, that we had made use of insolent expressions to him as a magistrate, would infallibly have weighed much against us with his brethren. But, certainly, the transaction is calculated to give one a low idea of the character and condition of the magistracy of France, in comparison with the corresponding ranks of magistrates in England. The man before whom we went, corresponds in official situation with one of the justices of peace that sit at Bow Street. The latter are obviously dressed as gentlemen, and in society they take the place of gentlemen. Our Lavalle justice had holes in the elbows of his coat, and coarse dirty worsted stockings on his legs. A steel watch chain hung from his fob, and a silk handkerchief was tied round his neck. His manners were those of a revolutionary ruffian, and we afterwards heard that he was a zealous Buonapartist. This news afforded us consolation under our defeat;

the ill-treatment we had received only justified our opinions of the character of the Buonaparte faction, and shewed the base qualities of the hearts that sympathized with his, and the coarse nature of his instruments. We were enabled to trace our private discomfiture to the rage of an individual, disappointed through the glory of our country. In general, however, it may be said, that all the various *grades* of society and office in France, are, at least, three degrees behind the corresponding *grade* in England. A member of the Chamber of Deputies cannot be raised to a par with a member of the British Parliament: a French nobleman is somebody or nobody as it may happen: there are but few instances in which a British nobleman does not carry with his name high consideration, and extensive influence. This is another proof how much France is behind England, in all the essentials of society.

CHAP. VII.

JOURNEY TO ANGERS.

When we went to the place where carriages are let in Lavalle, we found that the story of our dispute with our former postillion had got before us. A smart lad was sent by his master to shew us his carriages. "Ah," said he, "that fellow you have just dismissed, does not know his business: he cannot understand how to please his passengers; he is not a person to have any thing to do with the English. You are too good for him. Try me, and I'll shew you what driving is; — you shall confess that you are satisfied *à merveille.*" The young fellow had a smart brisk exterior, which gave favourable testimony to the truth of what he said. He seemed born to be a postillion. He had scarce a shoe on his foot, and no stockings, but his hair was

powdered, and tied up in an immense club-knot behind. We agreed with his master, and set out for Château Gontier.

Our driver was determined to keep his promise; he cracked his whip, and at every crack looked back upon us for applause: when he cut his horses, he seemed to demand a double portion of approbation. One of his horses was restive, and this gave him occasion to shew his horsemanship, which was excellent. He cursed his master for a *cochon*, because he kept the horse in question, after many proofs of his viciousness. He told us that the animal's freaks were peculiarly violent, because he had not been out with his present rider for some time, and the other boy could not ride him. We trembled for the lad's leg frequently: it would certainly have been broken against the clumsy and aukward shafts of the voiture, but for his admirable dexterity. It was altogether a scene worthy of Astley's. He was on and off his horse twenty times in half an hour, and a great part of the distance he went, sitting on his saddle as a woman, to save his leg from being hurt by his horse's sudden plunges.

Mentioning that he sat as a woman, suggests to me that the women in all this part of France ride *en cavalier*, that is to say, astradle. Nothing can be more disgusting than this practice at first sight; it is so contrary to an Englishman's ideas of decorum and propriety. The farmers' wives ride, displaying their legs without scruple; young ladies have a sort of black apron, which, being cut down the middle, divides, and pretty well conceals them. But still the appearance is loathsome. The riding-master at Angers told us that the fashion was spreading to Paris; but he being an equestrian of the old school, who derived his notions of this sublime art by direct hereditary descent from Monsieur Pignerole, resolutely set his face against the vulgar innovation. He assured us that his female pupils were not permitted to mount *en cavalier*, though many of them expressed a wish so to do. He traced the riding astradle of women to the revolution, and in the revolution Monsieur Pignerole lost his head, and the riding-school of Angers was destroyed with its churches; hence the existing riding-master was horrified at rid-

ing astradle. It was a practice which the king ought to have forbidden on his return, he thought. The constitutional chart conceded too much if it conceded this. He was quite ultra on this matter. No dispossessed nobleman can be more anxious for the restoration of the national property, than the riding-master of Angers to see women compelled to be seated sideways on horseback. Times, he thought, would never be well in France till this was done. On every occasion when we saw him, he insisted vehemently on the necessity of effecting this return to past habits.

The country still continued thickly wooded, and we passed through a large forest. At the entrance of this a large gallows was erected, and on the beam were nailed the carcases and skeletons of wolves, foxes, and other animals of prey. An inscription was placed over this fearful exhibition, which stated, that it was to deter the wicked, by a display of the miserable consequences that follow robbery and murder. "Therefore, oh, ye sanguinary wolves, ye knavish foxes, and predatory vermin, beware, for thus does your sovereign lord, man, reward your

guilty deeds!" The childishness of this may give an idea of the fanciful, trifling cast of the minds of the French. This board was put up by the proper authorities —by order of the prefect, perhaps. What should we think of a mayor in England, who had conceived, and caused to be executed, so elaborate a composition? The postillion pointed out the executed felons with a serious face, and stopped of his own accord, that we might read the touching inscription. He then cracked his whip, and went on in his old style, occasionally combating with his restive horse, and, after victory had declared for him, looking back on us with eyes as conscious of glory, as if he had been a general at the head of a triumphant army.

We reached Château Gontier early in the evening. It is a small pleasant town on the banks of the Mayenne, a pretty considerable river. We had scarcely entered it, when, from the windows of our voiture, we had discovered enough to make us remark that the place seemed cleaner than any we had ever seen in France. We stopped at a small inn, which fully confirmed, or rather

increased our first favourable impression. The articles in the kitchen, through which one must always pass to reach the rooms of a French inn, were tidy and complete. The landlady presented herself, a handsome woman, with a tendency to fleshiness becoming in one of her profession. Her own apartment, as we passed it, we saw to be nicely furnished, and the chambers up stairs left us nothing to wish for. Accommodations so unexpectedly excellent, after the wretched treatment, and insufficient supplies we had been accustomed to receive, gave our ladies extreme delight. They poured out their encomiums to our civil and prepossessing landlady, and, as the greatest possible compliment, told her, that her inn was as neat as an English one. She seemed much pleased at hearing this, and said, the town of Château Gontier had the reputation of being very *amiable*.

The walk we took up the streets supported what she said. We understood that the inhabitants were chiefly rich and genteel people, and the cleanliness of the externals of the houses wore the appearance of a Dutch rather than of a French town. After

crossing the bridge, from the inn, we found the streets remarkably steep and narrow; the town lying on the side of a romantic hill, of considerable height. The small shops are well furnished and well arranged; but the greater number of the houses are shut up within gardens, and thus shew that their owners are above trade. We did not see a single beggar in the place; whereas usually, in France, the traveller is invaded by them, and assailed at every corner and place of stoppage. We afterwards were told, that in fact there was not a single beggar in Châteâu Gontier. The road on which it is situated is not a very frequented one; the route we took being no direct line, either from or to Paris. Very few English, they said, passed through their town, and the appearance of our party of course excited much curiosity, and drew upon it much anxious observation.

Nothing can be imagined more beautiful than the view from the top of the hill, where there is the public promenade. It is crowned by a neat church, with a wooden spire, like the church of an English village. The river runs at its foot, and whether one

looks up or down, it presents delightful and luxuriant banks, with mills and pleasant houses. The houses scattered over the hill, are beautifully placed among the trees, and the promenade has the most superb prospect from its shaded walk.

We entered the church, which, notwithstanding all we had seen, quite astounded us by its surprising order and decency, compared with the general dilapidation of the churches in France. The passages were matted, a thing we had never seen before in the country. The whole of the interior was kept with the greatest care, and furnished even beyond completeness.

The sexton met us in the principal aisle, being, as he said, in constant attendance on the church. He was in appearance as much above his fellow-sextons as every thing else in the place was superior to what we had before seen in France. The church had no architectural elegancies or pictures to be shown; it was simply neat. He took us into a room where the priests robed for the service, and where there were wash-hand basins, and towels, and a general regularity of arrangement quite novel to us.

We began to wonder whether we had not been transplanted to England by enchantment. It seemed as if we had, at least, been removed from France. The old sexton was much pleased with our praises of his church and town, and the more so as we accompanied them with expressions of dissatisfaction with what we had seen in other French places. He also told us that Château Gontier was famous for what we admired in it and that the people were as good as they were clean. In the worst times of the Revolution, people fled from the massacres of the neighbouring towns to find a refuge in Château Gontier. On Sunday, as we were leaving the place, we passed by the church, at the hour of service, and we found it crowded even to without its doors. This is indeed an unusual appearance in France. If there are feelings connected with the Revolution less eradicated than the others, they are contempt for religion, and hatred for the priests. A female domestic said to us one day, "You do not pay much attention to your priests in England, we hear; but we despise them in France even more than you do: *A bas les charlatans!*"

Our old sexton told us, that, if we remained any time in the town, two of the clergymen would be very happy to call upon us. They had been some years in England, and were anxious to show their gratitude to the English.

The country around Château Gontier is chiefly covered with corn of an excellent quality. They spoke of provisions as cheap and plentiful, and to judge by the prices at the inns, the account was correct. Four of us paid twelve francs, or ten shillings, for coffee and supper in the evening, beds, and breakfast in the morning. We found, however, the charges regulated by no steady rule; they depended entirely upon the personal dispositions of the people at the inns. Sometimes the cheapness of the bills surprised us, and, at other times, their exorbitancy irritated us. The inequality was prodigious.

One felt pleased to find a town, so distinguishable from other French places in the externals of decency and good order, equally superior in those moral qualities that have at bottom a close connection with the perfection of the social condition. Through-

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out our journeying in France, we invariably observed that the moderate royalists were persons of amiable manners, and excellent character, and that, on the other side, the zealous Buonapartists were men of discontented, vicious minds, or of desperate circumstances. The fiercest enemy to the king, in one of the towns through which we passed, was a woman who beat her husband, cheated his creditors, and starved his children. To this rule, it would be illiberal to deny, there are exceptions; but the respective systems of the two governments recommend them separately to different casts of dispositions. The peaceful, the kind, and the religious, have, generally speaking, an abhorrence of that government, the chief fruits of which have been war, murder, and impiety. The needy, the fierce, and the restless, naturally cling to it with zealous attachment. Buonaparte, it may safely be said, is not regretted by one honest man in France: it is an error peculiar to England to connect his name with any thing desirable in the state of mankind. It is very certain that men of excellent intentions have committed this blunder in Eng-

land, and that he has more admirers and advocates in that country than in any other of the world. This may arise from the earnestness of political feeling, and the energy of political debating, in Great Britain. Where these prevail, men are fastly wedded to extreme opinions, and the strength of their minds precipitates them far beyond the mark. This, however, is a better fault than the stagnation of thinking on such subjects; an over-activity indicates the briskness of life, although it is necessary to guard against the excesses committed in this boisterousness. That there should be any now foolish enough to believe that purposes of moral and political improvement could in any way be promoted by the continuance of Buonaparte's sway, is certainly one of the strongest proofs of the blindness of party that has ever been afforded the world; but it becomes less surprising when one reflects that this attachment is but the consequence of *self-love*. This is always heightened by opposition; and as the cause, to the success of which our reputation for discernment and talent is connected, becomes more and more lost, our

egotistical sensations drive us to uphold it with increased pertinacity. It may be observed that those in England, who have, through the whole course of the Revolution considered the cause of human freedom dependent on its triumph, and who have not shaken off this idea, even under the tyranny and guide of the imperial despotism, are men of strong but egotistical minds, whose reasoning is acute, but always paradoxical, who think better than they act, and who take a pride in seeing qualities in things that no one else can see, or rather that are entirely opposite to those which the experience of mankind has proved to belong to them. Persons open to conviction, that is to say, persons whose self-love is not the highest consideration in their minds, have gradually withdrawn themselves from so disgraced a cause, and this has been falsely charged upon them as inconsistency and treachery. Others, who have founded their original opinions in moderation, and who have since been advancing into a bigotted and prejudiced opposition, are egotists of another description. These have not found sufficient consolation for their shallow va-

nity, in abiding by the general experience and interests of their fellow-creatures, and their miserable weakness hinders them from seeing how the real dignity of our nature consists chiefly in those affections which make improvement an hereditary descent from the past. The poverty of their minds renders them dead to what Burke describes as an honourable submission; they would raise their individual importance by sneering at all that is to be traced to the human race in general, and in which they, as individuals, have had nothing to do. That estrangement from natural affections, which Mr. Godwin at one time thought conducive to general moral justice, they have effected by the inordinacy of their self-esteem. They are not only first, but sole, in their own eyes. Godwin's error was a great one, and he has since acknowledged it; but it had a lofty source: the blunder of the others is as low in its origin as mischievous in its consequences.

We set out from Château Gontier in a smart style; our postillion always taking his departure with great vigour, though he did not sometimes sufficiently support the

hopes he thus excited. Even in his fallings-off, however, he preserved his air of self-satisfaction, and expectation of praise. Like his countrymen, he equally challenged the laurel crown in victory and in defeat. In a French melo-drama, performed at Paris, when the allies were removing the pictures from the Louvre, the genius of the French arms received the symbol of triumph on the stage!

The information which a traveller acquires in hastily passing through a country, in which he stops only to bait his horses, can only be such as is to be picked up at inns, and from the persons that are commonly met with on roads. In coming, however, to a decision on the political opinions of the public of a country, this species of information is very important. It is in the feelings of the lower and middle classes of the people that the great body of public sentiment must be sought; and these are the instruments, without which the leaders of parties can effect nothing. In this view, it may be interesting to state, that, at all the inns where we had recently stopped, and from the mouths of all the postillions

we had lately employed, we heard only expressions of the warmest loyalty and self-congratulations, that the king had been again restored to his capital, and that the usurper had been removed. The last fact they in part disbelieved, because, as one of them said, it is too good news to be true. They still regarded him with a sentiment of superstitious awe; but it was the awe of terror. They could not shake off their minds the influence of his qualities; but this influence was perpetuated in the remembrance of the evil he had done them. They very generally discredited his captivity in Elba: but that was because they could not conceive how the man who so long had France under his foot could fall below the feet of foreigners. Their national vanity was concerned here: they knew how he had reigned tyrant over them; and a fact so disreputable to them they were accustomed to ascribe to a force of the supernatural kind. That this force should have failed so wretchedly, so suddenly, and so tamely, they could not believe possible. We found scarcely a Frenchman that was to be assured of the truth in this respect. In the month

of August, a friend of mine, in Paris, received a letter from his brother, in the country, who is a sub-magistrate, enquiring as to the accuracy of the reports then current, that Buonaparte had again landed in France.

We dined at a place called the Lion of Angers, a small village, about fifteen miles from the capital of Anjou. Our landlady here expressed herself with tears in her eyes of the sufferings of France; and implored, in the tone of prayer, that the present order of things might last; but her fears seemed to overtop her hopes. Angers, she said, was a place of very bad sentiment; and we found her representation very correct. We arrived there in the evening; and the postillion, who had an interest in taking us to a particular house, set us down at the one he had originally intended for us, in direct contradiction to our orders. Without embarrassment, however, he assured us we were at the hotel we wished; and it was not until some days after that we found out his lie. The place he had selected was filthy and poor; the walls were covered with spit, and the floor with dust.

CHAP. VIII.

ANGERS.

THIS ancient city, the capital of the province of Anjou, stands about three miles from that noble river the Loire, on the banks of the Mayenne, which joins its considerable stream to the other magnificent one, at a small distance below. It is placed very much out of the way of English visitors, and has not lately attracted any attention. Yet it is a noted place in English history, and its name will, at once, sound familiarly to the ears of my readers who are conversant with dramatic amusements.

" *French Herald.* Ye men of Angiers, open wide
your gates,
And let young Arthur, Duke of Bretagne, in;
Who, by the hand of France, this day hath made
Much work for tears in many an English mother,
Whose sons lie scattered on the bleeding ground.

" *English Herald.* Rejoice, you men of Angiers,
ring your bells;
King John, your king, and England's, doth approach,
Commander of this hot, malicious day!
Their armours, that march'd hence so silver bright,
Hither return all gilt with Frenchmen's blood;
There stuck no plume in any English crest,
That is removed by a staff of France;
Our colours do return in those same hands
That did display them, when we first marched forth;
And, like a jolly troop of huntsmen, come
Our lusty English, all with purpled hands,
Dyed in the dying slaughter of their foes;
Open your gates! — and give the victors way."

King John.

The citizens of Angers, thus challenged, felt themselves in the doubtful and difficult situation to which all France has been, by late events, reduced.

" *Citizen of Angiers.* We are the King of England's
subjects;
For him, and in his right, we hold the town.

" *King John.* Acknowledge, then, the king, and let
me in.

" *Citizen.* That can we not: but he that proves the
king,
To him we will prove loyal; till that time
Have we rammed up our gates against the world.
Till you compound whose right is worthiest,
We, for the worthiest, hold the right from both."

The citizens played, what they thought, a safe game, though they had nearly suffered by it. They left the challengers to settle the right by fighting, and he for whom victory declared they were ready to consider the legitimate king. Much the same sort of test has been lately applied, to try the question of *conscience !*

The French king is made by Shakspeare to threaten the citizens:

> " 'Tis not the rondure of your old-faced walls
> Can hide you from our messengers of war."

The walls at this day seem those for which this description was given; yet their history declares that they were built by King John. Probably the old walls were rebuilt by this monarch, when he became master of the town; for the French had in the end to say, —

> " Are we not *beaten?* Is not *Angiers lost?*"

The present walls are as fine a monument of antiquity as I have ever seen; ponderous, frowning, and lofty, they retain their strength and majesty, in open and proud defiance of time. The town, like Old Edin-

burgh, reclines on a steep hill; the streets are almost perpendicular, to the great inconvenience of passengers and carriages. The walls and castle crown the top of the hill, and look down upon the deep streets below.

Buonaparte rebuilt the bridge of this town, but left a pyramid, which stood in the middle of the old bridge, as a part of the new. The pyramid was to record, that, beyond it, the English were not able to penetrate into the town;—an historical inaccuracy, which suited the popular feeling here; for the citizens of Angers now cherish a violent antipathy against the English, and a strong leaning towards the destroyed government.

Angers is a town, that in every feature gives evidence of its antiquity. Its houses are all ancient, retaining the air of the buildings five hundred years back. There is little or no trade belonging to it; its streets are dirty, dark, silent, and dull. There is, however, an extraordinary number of watchmakers in the place, bearing a proportion to the shops of other descriptions much beyond the common one. One of these

persons told me that they had little or nothing to do: they were not in the custom of selling one watch in the course of three months. They were in the habit of repairing a little daily, by which they might make four or five francs a-day; and on this small sum they were obliged to subsist their families. A bookseller assured me that he had not sold twenty books in twenty weeks. By disposing of a few sheets of writing-paper, pens, ink, and wafers, he made his living, such as it was. Their want of prosperity and animation renders the markets cheap, and they are plentifully supplied. But even here, they say, things are now much dearer than they were. As a standard of the expense of living, in a certain style, I may mention, that a half-pay Major was boarded and lodged for 40*l.* per annum.

We arrived on a Sunday in Angers, and had scarcely set our feet in the inn, before we were told by the landlady, that, if we had a mind to see the promenade, we were almost too late; and it was delightful. This immediate and earnest intimation induced us to think that there must be something peculiarly interesting in the pro-

menade of Angers, above that of all other towns. We accordingly made ourselves a little smart, and then set out. The landlady's ideas of the delightful differed in some measure from ours. We found, at the very top of the town, in a place which looked like a horse-market, three or four rows of miserable trees, and a number of people, male and female, walking up and down between them, staring at each other. This sort of ridiculous promenading is in vogue throughout all France: you never scarcely meet a walking party any where in the country, near great towns: if ladies and gentlemen wish to walk, they go to the promenade of the place, where, on week-days, they may see servant-girls and children, and on Sundays look at their neighbours, every one of whom they know.

In the fine gardens and noble parks that form the ornaments of large capitals, the fashionable promenade has many charms, which in the shabby dull square of a provincial town it cannot have. In the beautiful gardens of the Thuilleries, in the magnificent plantation of Brussels, and the noble space of Hyde Park, there are col-

lected strangers of every sort, and specimens of all sorts of fashions. Here curiosity is gratified, the eye is pleased, and the spirits are raised: but walking up and down amongst monotonous and stupid rows of trees, meeting only with neighbours and friends in their Sunday's clothes; the grocer recognizing his friend the tobacconist,—is a piece of finery and amusement only to the taste of a Frenchman.

Angers has been a town principally devoted to the clergy; and churches, episcopal palaces, and places of public instruction, are scattered in ruins over the whole place. These add very much to the desolate, but solemn air of the streets. The remains of the churches present some of the finest specimens I ever saw of the Gothic architecture, in its earliest state, as it is distinguished from the Saxon. The lofty windows, and finely fluted arches of the door-ways, perpetually invite the stranger at Angers to enter the inside, where probably they find a workshop of carpenters, or a depôt of sacks, or of timber. We see in France now, a melancholy process scarcely yet stopped, of which, in other countries,

we can only see the sad fruits. We stand amidst the ruins of castles, churches, and convents in England; struck chiefly by an anxious imagination of the far distant times, in which these noble buildings could have been suffered thus to fall into decay. We cannot picture to ourselves the sort of manners, and the style of society, that could have prevailed when these events took place. Every thing is now so different in our country; property is so perpetuated; every lump of stone attached to another with mortar is of so fixed and ready a value; and great eruptions and savage destructions are so far from our experience, that we are quite at a loss to conceive in what state mankind could have been, when these lofty roofs were beaten in; these noble pillars broken; these magnificent pavements spoiled and defaced. Still more inscrutable is the source of that power which was competent to the erection of these stupendous, yet beautiful masses of building. Modern masonry compared with it is but as a modern beau compared with a Titanian giant. Look at the obscured glory of the high-pointed windows of a

cathedral; the terrific suspended threat of its arched roof; the rapid loftiness of its slim pillars; the capacity of its aisles, the interminable look of its passages; the mysterious promise of its many doors; the echoing of its vaults; the winding of its staircases, and that grand spaciousness, which is every where the characteristic of the place, and which constitutes it the solemn palace of silence:—look at an ancient cathedral with all these features perfect, and it seems the work of the Creator, rather than of man;—look at it in ruins, and it seems the victim of an earthquake, rather than of any human mischief.

In France now, they have scarcely finished the work of devastation; and we easily observe the transition between the fulness of life and the emptiness of death. The scholars have hardly left the porches of the universities, whose roofs were pulled on the heads of their teachers. A surviving priest may be observed gliding, like a ghost of other times, round the defiled altar, where he himself celebrated the sacred incarnation, and raised in his trembling hands what he believed to be the real body of the

Saviour of the world, the Son, and equal of the Most High God! Where the awe-struck adorers knelt and humbled their faces to the ground, there carpenters are at work, passing the rude jest, and indulging their boisterous mirth! We still see in some of these edifices the shrivelled death-like remnant of their existence. The pomp of sacerdotal ceremony has for ever been removed; the oracle has fled; the charm is broken: but, in reproach, degradation, and poverty, some of the priesthood yet remain by their shrines, and feel the mortification of the contrast but as an incentive to kindle the enthusiasm of their zeal, and as a communication sent directly from heaven, the severity of which they are bound to venerate and adore. The desolated look of these churches kindled in my mind feelings which probably their better days would have failed to inspire. Where the large tapers flared on occasions of grand mass, a weakly lamp now glimmers on the damp encrusted wall, twinkling in the wide gloom. Where thousands knelt on cushions to the organ's noble swell, five or six aged men and women humble themselves

on broken chairs, when called upon by the harsh voice of a broken-down curate, whose tattered habiliments speak piteously of poverty and neglect. Cobwebs hang over the windows, where curtains fell in draperies; and darkness and dirt obscure the temple of heaven, the splendour of which was but lately deemed a necessary proof and test of sincere devotion.

One summer's evening, when the sun had just set, leaving part of his brightness in the twilight, I entered one of these decaying churches, with a lady, after a long and rather fatiguing walk along the green flat banks of the broad and tranquil river Mayne. Mackenzie, in the Man of Feeling, speaks of the frame of melancholy contemplation which takes possession of the mind, after bodily fatigue suddenly respited, amidst quiet yet striking objects. We sat down to rest ourselves in the great aisle, and felt the influence of this mood. We listened in silence to the twittering of the swallows, that glided up and down amidst the arches of the roof, and about the broken panes of the windows, which admitted, in small straight lines, a scanty portion of the tempered light

of this clear evening. Where they fell, it was on images of a solemn and awful kind. They enabled us to discover, in one corner, the bosom of a female mourner, reclining on a marble monument; — in another the form of Death holding his scythe over his victim; — in another, that grim memento of our fate, the skull and cross-bones. All that was distant lay in heavy and broad shadow. The small noise of the birds, and their sudden separate flittings, added greatly to the effect of this impressive scene: as their wings hushed past our ears, we could have imagined the flight of spirits, or the sounds of the angelic presidency of this religious place. It had seemed for some time that sounds of another kind murmured on our ears, from the further recess near the altar: on listening, with undivided attention, I ascertained it was not fancy, and my companion proceeded with me, through the gloom, which had now much increased, towards the spot from whence they came. As we approached, we could distinguish the voice of the priest; but as he read in a cadence, beginning each sentence in a whisper, raising it, in the middle, to a tone of

chaunting, and dropping it, as he came to the end, into another plaintive whisper, the sound assumed an unearthly strain as it fell down the aisle, blended with its varying echoes. When we could discover the objects, we found them well suited to increase the melancholy of our feelings. The coffin of a youth of fifteen, covered with a dirty white cloth, was placed on two chairs, before an old shabby priest, who was reading the burial-service, with his eyes half-closed, and his tongue scarcely pronouncing the words. A wretched-looking man, the sexton, stood at the other end of the corpse, sprinkling it in the form of a cross with holy water. Not a soul of friends or relations had accompanied this poor young man to his last home; — he was lying there within his narrow box, with no friendly or sad faces about him, but those of two strangers from England! Indolence, indifference, poverty, misfortunes, and age, had the aptest representatives in the miserable two who were performing his funeral rites. The hum of the priest's voice still sounded and spread amidst the arches, and down the aisles: suddenly it ceased; the book was

closed; not a look was given to the coffin. The clergyman staggered away, like an overcome labourer whose weary task had at last terminated: the sexton stripped off the white cloth, flung the coffin over his shoulders, and hurried it out of one of the side doors, locking it with a noise behind him. There was then a human being gone away from the world; and it appeared at the instant as if we alone were left behind him. We stood for a minute or two silent on the spot: the chairs remained, but they were now empty; the old priest's voice had sounded, but it had ceased; there had been light, but it was gone; the swallows had been flying, but they were now in their nests. A poor woman, with a ragged child, came up, and said she was going to close the door for the night. We followed her and her infant slowly down the long passage, and one step put us in the middle of a gay party in the road, on their way to the evening promenade.

It is not alone churches that here evince this sad transition from strength to decay. Angers was famous for a riding-school, unique in the world for its reputation and the rank

of its scholars. The English laws have left an immortal name behind them here: the education of a fine gentleman in Queen Anne's time was not complete till he had been instructed in the *grand manège* at Angers. It had then all the forms, pedantries, solemnities, and accommodations of an ancient university, where Greek and divinity are taught; and this to honour and promote the gay and elegant exercise of riding. Monsieur Pignerolè, the last master of this superb institution, from the description of him given to us by the inhabitants, must have been just such an individual as would be formed by compounding the separate vital essences of Beau Nash, the late master of ceremonies in Bath, with that of the most learned doctor of theology that ever taught at Oxford. Kings were proud to study under this great man, who, in extreme old age, had a very suitable death, falling, shortly after his sovereign, under the axe of the Jacobins, or, according to their other name, the *Philosophers*. On the walls of the ride, there are still to be discerned the words Anglais, Eccossais, below the effaced arms of our many noblemen

who put themselves under Monsieur Pignerolē, or his predecessors; and the travelling names of Peter of Russia, the King of Spain, and the King of Poland, are also to be traced on these memorable walls. The mob thought, that if kings had been instructed how to sit their horses by Monsieur Pignerole; if the place had furnished models of elegant accomplishment; if it perpetuated the memory of nobles and princes, and cast back the recollection upon the glories of the French monarchy, and the splendours of an age of chivalry and politeness; it was not fit that the school should stand in the age of reason and throat-cutting; or that the master should continue to live amongst a people, every soul of whom was far exalted above a riding-master, being a citizen-philosopher. They accordingly cut off Monsieur Pignerole's head, and did their utmost to pull down the building. They tired, however, in attempting to effect this last exploit, and probably took an excuse to quit their labour, that they might perform the necessary civic duty of hanging some old priest, or piking some young woman.

The walls and even the apartments of this fine edifice remain pretty entire, but sadly defaced. We were led through the range of gentlemen's apartments: one room was devoted to each scholar, with a small chamber for a domestic. We might fancy these filled with the finest gentlemen of the age of the spectator, mingled with the flower of the court of Versailles. Our female conductor pointed out to us the room of *Monsieur Pignerole*, as a Mussulman would point to the black stone at Mecca, or a Catholic to our lady's image at Loretto. It was in no respect distinguished from the others, but in having two chambers attached to it instead of one. The floors were all of mere brick. On the second floor was a similar suite of rooms for the lady students. The finest women of the various European courts lived here for months, and one can easily picture to one's self the gay and gallant scenes that took place. On this floor there was a ball-room, the disfigured remains of which are enough to prove that it was very elegant. This, then, is the ruin of a magnificent institution, displaying the grace, and pride, and luxury, and charm,

and accomplishment, of the feudal system of manners and ranks, which having now faded from the world, cannot be again seen in it. The whole thing is now over: the Bourbons are restored, and may keep their places; but that high feeling of native superiority, that fearless carriage of innate and imperishable rank, that florid air of unquestionable privilege, that good humoured tyranny, which displayed itself in the wantonness of having every thing at command, and not in the harshness of having any thing to struggle for; that manly gaudiness, that brave foppishness, that unconscious profligacy, which seemed rather an attribute of the class, than the quality of an individual; — these, and the character they formed, are gone for ever. There is no such thing now to be found in the world: on the Continent it has been destroyed by revolutionary outrages; in England by the equality of ranks, the lower ones rising in the great progress of opulence and information. The bubble we have described was of beautiful colours, and though but a bubble, it sparkled like a meteor, and captivated admiration, as it floated mystically above

our heads. It might have floated for ever if the sunshine had not continued; but the storm has dissipated it, and it is not to be again launched. I confess that, after all, this splendid piece of elegant inflation is a much more agreeable object of reflection than the coarse impositions and knaveries that took its place. The old nobility did not talk much of virtue, or peace, or social concord; their creed took honour for its duty, and bravery for its high priest. "There is the breach, my friends," said a French Marquis to his *musquetaires* — a regiment of gentlemen; "several of us must get killed, but those who escape will have fine stories to tell the ladies of the court, and will, no doubt, be well rewarded." We can all understand this; if it be not good, it is genuine; but the gang of cut-throat philosophers and metaphysicians, the guillotining priests of paternal love and universal amity; the cruel and tyrannical administrators of liberty and equality; the mob of atheists, and the gods and goddesses from the theatres and the brothels, were as cold, heartless, and tawdry, as they were base, insolent, and atrocious. Why they perpe-

trated the grossest mischief was a matter above our sympathy to define.

The defaced shell of this riding-school was converted by Buonaparte into a barrack. Underneath the titles of the former noble inhabitants of these apartments, there were now written on the bare and dirty walls, — "*Benares*, 1st regiment of Voltigeurs." — *D'Espilly*, Chasseurs." — "*Raimbault*, 4th Company of Light Cavalry." —"*Basancourt*, Sapeurs." In some of the rooms the straw and wooden bedsteads of the detachment that had just marched out were left. The troops in France generally take up their quarters in some dilapidated building, in the wretched apartments of which they shelter themselves as well as they can. They never think of building new barracks in France, or preparing completely furnished places of residence for the soldiers, as in England. The *make-shift* system extends equally to the acts of the public authorities of the country, as to the private manners of individuals. — Below, in the vaults of this *caserne*, where the horses were kept, there were various inscriptions, lately from the hands of the soldiers. One was, "To the devil with

Nicolas;" another, "To England with *Louis:*" "*A bas Le Duc D'Angoulême,*" "*Vive le Roi,*" "*Vive la France,*" "*Vive la Constitution,*" and "*Vive le Carnage!!*" were scrawled in defiance of each other, forming a singular medley of political sentiment.

The transformation of this once elegant institution into a barrack for soldiers is no unapt representation of the general character of the French Revolution in the hands of the anarchists first, and of Buonaparte afterwards. The errors of the previous system were destroyed, but it was to put violence and vulgarity in their place: careless and fierce soldiers; fortune-hunting generals, and kingdom-hunting marshals, were given to the country in lieu of its hereditary nobility; while a new and capacious military despotism was the exchange for a civil one of long standing, and of mild administration.

Angers possessed a university of some fame; the teachers in it were ecclesiastics, and it was of course destroyed. The name and the house remain, but not the pupils and professors. Two schools were established in lieu by Buonaparte: one at which

the sciences conducive to expert military practice are taught, another at which general education is given. Like most considerable French towns, it has its public library and its *Musée* of art. The public libraries are institutions that cannot be too much praised. That at Angers includes almost every book in the principal languages of the world that a student can have occasion to call for, in pursuing any branch of science and literature. The access to these is perfectly free, the conveniencies for study are excellent, and thus the necessity of having private libraries is almost quite superseded. Those who cannot buy books know where to find them, and there is at the command of every poor student in the provinces of France a collection of scarce and valuable works, which scarcely any private fortune could purchase.

Nothing can be more interesting than the sight which presents itself on entering one of these public libraries. General silence prevails, and is most respectfully preserved. The librarian addresses a stranger in a whisper, and conducts him, walking so as to make no noise, to the curiosities of the place.

Around the long tables the readers sit, some of them old men, veterans in the pursuit of those fascinating, but not always advantageous pleasures, which a literary life offers: others, young men, just starting on the career, full of hope and intense application. The dress and appearance of many of these show that they are looking upward to the splendid fruits that hang from the tree of knowledge, from low conditions of life, and a multitude of difficulties; and the probably heavy disappointments that lie waiting on these raise a melancholy sympathy in their behalf. The French are in general excellent students; they pursue laborious investigation with extreme patience, and their natural shrewdness enables them quickly and cleverly to draw results from investigation. If genius could come from reading, or truth from systematizing, the chief abode of both would be in France; but this unfortunately for the French is not the case. Perpetual building upon the works of others is repeating over again the folly of the tower of Babel. You may reach to a great height, but to what purpose? As you rise you lose sight of the earth, and

have just as little chance, as when laying the first brick, of gaining heaven. Still, however, we must repeat our eulogium on the wise public spirit in France that provides these noble libraries for the delight and assistance of those whom fortune seldom favours enough to enable them to furnish themselves very fully in this respect. England deserves to be told of her shameful deficiency on this main point, in the warmest language. The locked doors of a college-room, which are only opened by the porter who *shows* the books for half-a-crown, or the guarded gates of a mighty museum, to get within which tickets must be sought and granted, are all she possesses in this way. These invite not the poor and naked, the hungry and the thirsty, but the graduated, the known, and the wealthy. A student with a shabby coat can scarcely reach these guarded treasures; and if he should be fortunate enough to do so, a repulsive air would greet his entrance, and the liveried attendants would deem themselves degraded if called upon to wait on so humble a reader. In France, to her credit be it said, the distinction between the well-dressed and the ill-dressed is not

known in scientific and literary society. — The internal qualifications alone settle the degree of deference here.

The museum of pictures in Angers is respectable, but not remarkable. Their best paintings are of the Flemish school. They have also one or two good Claudes, an excellent Sir Joshua Reynolds, and some doubtful pictures, said to be by Raphael, Correggio, Titian, &c. The pictures by Frenchmen are among the best I have seen of that class, and altogether the collection may be described as exceedingly valuable for the purposes of young painters.

The botanical garden at Angers is not less delightful as a walk than as a place for study. It is very neatly laid out indeed, and in some parts of it includes very fine views. The unfairness of comparing it with the great botanical garden of Paris would be evident; but the first exercises of a student of botany may be extremely assisted by the collection here. The plants are well arranged, neatly kept, and extended with a laudable public spirit, even farther than could be expected from the means of the place.

The castle, as has already been noticed, though built so many years ago, cannot be called a ruin; a very small part of it, however, is now made any use of. The principal part of the massy towers and stupendous building are uninhabited and unappropriated. A guard of engineers was maintained in one corner of this venerable place. A French half-pay officer, who had been five years a prisoner of war in England, introduced us to the engineer officer who commanded this guard. The latter had also been a captive in our country, having fallen into the hands of our army on the memorable occasion of the storming of Saint Sebastians. He was an old man of simple mild manners, and apparently of no great sense. Although a major in a very distinguished corps, whose rank is much above that of the line, his apartments were mean, his person was dirty, and his manners were awkward. Judging from the drawings that hung round his room, one could form no favourable idea of his military abilities: his delight lay in what he described as his garden, which, when he took us out to see it, we found was a patch of ground, exactly three feet square, which he had di-

vided into smaller regular squares, and stuck full of flowers.

We were shocked to find these two gentlemen concur in the almost general testimony of those Frenchmen who have been prisoners of war in England, as to the ill treatment they received. They both professed the utmost esteem for the individuals in our country, with whom they had been happy enough (as they said) to form an acquaintance; but their treatment by the people generally, and the arrangements made by the government for their accomodation, as captives, they said, were barbarous in the extreme. This subject is involved in considerable mystery; for, certainly, the evidence of persons such as these, who felt extremely the irksomeness of their situation as prisoners, is not to be accepted as a matter of course. But the very general complaints and accusations prevailing in France on this head, ought, if possible, to be authentically refuted; for they most seriously inculpate the character of England abroad. They come, as I have said, from every mouth. A man at work on the river, at Angers, who, as a private sailor, had been

prisoner in England, spoke to us with a shudder of his treatment; and on the walls of Paris there have been suspended drawings, made by the returned prisoners, of the inside of the prison-ships in which they were confined. The delineations are assisted by notes, which, in the most lively language, describe the horrors of the situation of the captives, and the various acts of cruelty and injustice under which they profess themselves to have suffered. In almost every town in France we heard the same outcry; and a most painful one it is to English ears.

The half-pay officer who introduced us to the castle was a marked and interesting specimen of the discontented class in France. He had, in fact, been sent from Paris to this remote town, by order of authority; and was living under the surveillance of the police. It seemed singular that Angers should be selected for this sort of depôt, for the sentiments of the inhabitants were by no means such as to overpower the accession of angry anti-loyal feeling, and thus render it harmless. The reputation of Angers is, that it is one of

the most anti-Bourbon towns in France; and we had no reason given us to doubt the accuracy of the representation. To this place, strange to say, the French government has thought proper to send ten or a dozen half-pay officers, of suspected designs!

Our acquaintance, already referred to, was anxious to become acquainted with us as English. I could soon perceive the drift of his sentiments, though for some time he spoke with great caution, and never entirely threw off reserve. He commenced by sounding his way. "*Little Boney*, as you call him, is quiet enough now: pray what do you think of him in England?"

"Oh, that he is, as you say, quiet enough, and likely to be so."

"Yes, but some of your countrymen doubt very much whether he is really at Saint Helena, after all."

"Some of your countrymen, you mean, Monsieur: all my countrymen know he is there."

"Perhaps: but your papers say, that the allies had no business to send him there."

"Ah, that is another affair, Monsieur; you know our papers will say any thing."

"Yes, and ours in France must now say nothing."

"A little more, I think, than in Buonaparte's time."

"How? are they not suppressed now, often enough?"

"In his time, they knew better than to run any risk of being suppressed?"

"Yet, let me tell you, many of your countrymen, the English, think very well of Buonaparte."

"We do not all of us know him so well as *you* do, for example."

"Ah, to be sure, I know him very well: I ought to know him; for I was with him in Austria and in Spain. I was at the battle of Austerlitz. My God, there was a battle! In England, you have no idea of such a battle. How the good people of England would tremble, if they heard in their cottages the cannonading of such a battle as Austerlitz!"

This is in fact our dialogue, almost word for word; and it may serve to give an idea of a Frenchman's dexterity in argument; and of his delicacy in the choice of his topics. My acquaintance's last remark drew

on a train of national comparisons, from the repetition of which the reader may be saved.

I found this gentleman, though of considerable military rank, and of most respectable family, very ignorant of the common outlines of the political history and affairs of the day. One morning he brought me news, that the Duke of Wellington was suddenly called home from Paris, and made prime minister of England; that a revolution had broken out, and that it was said an American army had landed, and was making a rapid advance on London, headed by French officers. In other parts of France we heard this tale often repeated. By some it was said that the Prince Regent had actually taken shelter at Fontainbleau; and that the royal French army, commanded by the Duke de Berri, was on its march for England, to assist in restoring him to his throne, from which he had been expelled by the revolutionary party, who had also tried the Duke of Wellington *par contumacé*, and sentenced him to death.

The great emigration from England was referred to by all these tale-tellers, as a cor-

roboration of the fact, that deadly disturbances were taking place in that country. Our friend at Angers said, that he understood, from the English themselves, whom he met at the *Table d'hôte*, that Britain was almost depopulated: that thousands were daily shipping themselves off to America; and equal numbers applying for passports to the Continent. The semblance of truth, which this last statement bore, was sufficient to render the whole of the exaggeration invincible. In fact, there is no working upon ignorance, if it takes it into its head to have an opinion. No explanation is of any avail with it; facts are the same to it as falsehoods; and the best-founded reasons are to it as mere assertions, that have no foundation at all. This, in regard to politics, is the state of the great majority of people at this moment in France.

The officer alluded to was a man of the quickest natural powers. He was an almost perfect musician, and that, as he told us, almost without study; his repartees were admirable; he drew prettily; and it is almost unnecessary to add, that he danced to admiration. Yet it was impossible, even

with the most favourable and friendly impression in his favour, to avoid seeing, that of every species of serious practical knowledge, as well as of all moral principles, he was totally destitute. He neither knew nor cared about the proprieties or facts of the case: but he was sure, as he would himself confess, when hard pressed, that he was *on half pay;* and it was enough for him to know this. As to grounding his attachment to the previous government on any belief or regard, connected with the triumph of liberty, nothing was farther from his mind. Buonaparte, he said, was a great man, and they were now destroying all the great men in France; and when they had done that, they would be able to dispose of the country as they pleased. It was to this state of misery that England wished to reduce France; it had all along been her design; the Emperor was alone able to frustrate it; under the Bourbons it would certainly take place, unless America should, as was very likely, give a mortal blow to British preponderance before long.

In this way he would rattle on, speaking entirely from the strength of passion, ex-

cited by interest, and afforded scope by ignorance. In the midst of one of these violent political effusions, he suddenly stopped short, to pluck a flower, and show me how, by a process of divination, he could find out whether his sweetheart were true to him or not. Though highly jealous of England, and indignant against her government, he professed, and I believe entertained, a very sincere respect for the English people, with whom he became acquainted during his captivity. He showed me, with great pride, some friendly letters he had recently received from English friends; and they were of a nature to prove his personal respectability, which, from his manner, I had never doubted.

While I was in Angers, a circumstance occurred, which forcibly showed the little regard in which the personal security of citizens is held in France, when brought into comparison with military forms and duties. The house where we lodged was situated close to the principal bridge of the town, which formed also its chief entrance from the north. On the end of this bridge, close to where we lived, there was a guard-

house, and the centinel, after the hour of ten at night, challenged all passers by with the *Qui vive?* It was about eleven o'clock one very stormy night: I was undressing, and listening to the howling of the wind, and the beating of the rain, when I heard the challenge given: it was not answered; it was repeated; still unanswered: the soldier called the third time, and immediately afterwards discharged his piece. I heard the ball distinctly, and immediately ran to the window. It had been fired into the very thick of the houses. The guard turned out, and shortly afterwards a waggoner came over the bridge, with his heavy wheels grinding along, sufficient to render him deaf to any other sound. He said the ball had whistled past his ear, and wished to know what was the matter: he was arrested by the soldiers for not replying to the *Qui vive?*

I could not go to bed till I had at least made some noise about this outrage. I disturbed the landlord; he said it was an *abomination*, "but the soldier had his orders." "Very true," replied I; "but what is to come of the *deaf?*"—"Oh, it would be so much the worse for them to be on the

bridge after ten at night," said the Frenchman.—"And is the soldier, moreover," continued I, "to fire into a crowded town, because one man does not hear his nonsensical *Qui vive?* Why, I might have been shot at your window, for the ball went very near me."—"That would have been a frightful calamity," said my landlord, with a bow: "let us thank God it has not happened."

Next morning, the hair-dresser made me a visit. I thought, of course, he must have heard the news, and that he would have been full of it. I expected to be accosted with—"Lord, Sir, a sad business this in your neighbourhood: a waggoner shot at, I understand, his horse frightened, and himself imprisoned. Terrible doings these, with the soldiers; I expect some day they will take offence at my curling-irons."

Something like these would have been first words of an English hair-dresser under similar circumstances; but the perruquier at Angers had heard nothing of the incident, and cared nothing about it. He did not live near the bridge, he said; and people seldom spoke about what did not concern

them. I thought the opportunity too good to be lost, for impressing this French operator with a notion of the superior way in which we manage public matters in England. "In my country," said I, "if such an event had occurred, there would have been meetings of the towns-people to protest against so lawless and wanton an exercise of the military power. The journals of the district would write their pens out in its reprobation; the London journals would catch the cry; the daily ones would state the fact, with indignant comments; the weekly ones would indite essays, and publish letters with fine signatures to great people, against the horrid attempt to take away the life of a citizen: finally, some member of parliament would make an eloquent speech, and a strong motion on the subject; it would be thought so gross a case, that the ministry would make little or no resistance to the proposal, and parliamentary censure would be the least punishment that the offenders would incur." The hair-dresser did not seem quite to understand all this; but he said he knew that in England we did a great deal that was not done in France.

I found generally prevalent in Angers the common notion, that England had chiefly caused the internal outrages of France during the revolution. When you refer to any of these, and to the foolish way in which the nation conducted herself in the search for liberty, the reply generally is: "Ah, England knew what she was about: she did all that; and she has profited by it." With this weak, but exasperated feeling, it is not surprising that they should hear of the embarrassments of England with triumph. My landlord participated warmly in this sentiment. He never meddled with poilties, he said, but he thought it was time it should go a little hard with England at last. It is not, therefore, too much to say, that hatred of our country almost universally prevails in France. It is founded on strong jealousy, and in deep mortification, and must therefore be very powerful. They hate our pride, of which they accuse us; they hate our preservation; they hate us even for the money we spend with them, since it is a proof of our superior ability.

CHAP. IX.

VOYAGE FROM ANGERS TO TOURS.

We thought to proceed to Tours from Angers by water, up the river Loire. The ascent of the river is not often attempted by passengers, the current running so very strong that there is no rowing against it; the boats therefore are dragged by men with ropes, or pushed along with poles, unless when the wind is very fair. This sort of navigation did not promise much; but as we had plenty of time, and wished to enjoy the fine river, we determined to try the hazards and inconveniences of the voyage.

Our bargain was made with a family of sailors, residing at the Pont de Cé, which may be described as a series of immense

wooden bridges over this great river, distant about a league from Angers. The Loire is divided here into two great branches; but inundations often spread it into half a dozen more, and make its breadth not less than three miles. The continuation of bridges is therefore of not less extent; and as it was flooded very much when we embarked upon it, we had an opportunity of seeing it in its splendour.

The first view of its mighty stream, pouring down with great rapidity, gave us some alarm as to venturing ourselves upon it in the very awkward boats that are here used. The wind however was fair, and the boatmen assured us that we should reach Tours in two, or at most three days; the distance being about ninety miles.

We were to sleep in the inns by the road side at night, and to pursue our way early in the morning. The boat would hardly have been honoured with the name of one in England. Flat-bottomed, shapeless, fit neither for sailing, nor for rowing! A sort of wooden shed was built in it for our accommodation, within which our trunks were placed, and seats were put. The sail was

an immense square one, that enabled us to derive little or no advantage from any wind that was not directly fair. We had three men with us, brothers, who lived with their father and sister at home, and seldom had, as they said, any work to do. One of these had been a prisoner in England.

Our progress for the first eight miles gave us a very favourable idea of the plan we had adopted, and we complimented our own sagacity in disregarding the advice of the good people of Angers, who were all mightily shocked when they heard us speak of encountering the perilous Loire. One said that a man had been drowned in it a year ago; and another assured us, that we should be a month on the water, before we reached Tours.

For the first eight miles, as I have said, we got on very pleasantly. The day was fine, the scenery pretty, and we made way against the roaring current, by the help of one enormous square sail, with considerable rapidity. After about three hours, however, had passed, the wind shifted a little against us, and, what was worse, the river at the same time shifted its course, render-

ing the wind totally contrary. The men got out on the meadow to pull the boat; this seemed to us tedious, but we still proceeded, though slowly. By and bye, the meadow finished, and a thicket of willows, extending far into the water, compelled them to get into the boat again. They pushed her on with their poles, at the rate of a mile an hour; but soon this recourse failed, the water became too deep for their poles! What did they do then? An English boatman would have given it up as a bad job; the Frenchmen treated it as a mere trifle; they, as a matter of course, laid by their poles, and pulled their heavy boat on, by means of the *willow twigs*, at the rate of a yard a minute. Whenever a bit of open land presented itself they sprung to the shore, and hauled with the rope; when it terminated, they sprung in again, and either crawled on by the bushes, or pushed with their poles, as they could. Sometimes they were pulling the rope, on the top of a great precipice above us: the cord would then entangle in a tree, and they would have to climb upon the overhanging branches to disentangle it! It seemed to

us madness to think of making any considerable progress in this way. One half the difficulties would have constituted twenty impossibilities in England, yet by half-past eight o'clock at night, we found ourselves at Les Rosieres, a village twenty-four miles from our place of starting.

The patience, perseverance, industry, and dexterity shown by the men, were truly astonishing. Their fatigue was enormous; they met disappointments at every turn, and every new step produced a new embarrassment; yet an oath, or a fretful word, never escaped the mouth of one of them; and I may say, that I never in my life saw a more impressive illustration of the value of attention to small means, and steady exertions, than in our progress to-day. It was a wonderful verification of the proverb, *A pin a-day is a groat a-year.* We got on by inches; but in the end we had conquered miles. Occasionally we were delayed for half an hour at a time, by a long gang of immense barges, occupying the shores for perhaps a quarter of a mile: past these we could only drag ourselves by the most painful and tedious labour, yet nothing tri-

umphed over the good humour of our little crew.

A dreary wet night had come on for an hour before we reached Les Rosieres. The rain poured in torrents, but our shed kept us dry; the hard work of the sailors, however, seemed still more severe, when exercised under the storm at night-fall. During the day, the weather had been fine; and as we had heard a great deal of the beautiful scenery of the banks of the Loire, we looked eagerly about us for fine views. In this, during the course of the first day, we were a good deal disappointed. The country on the left bank of the river (looking upward) was entirely flat, and concealed from sight by the stone-causeway, on the top of which the post-road runs, following all the turnings of the river, as far almost as Blois, forty miles beyond Tours. This is, indeed, a great work; but it seems but a bad contrivance, and shows but little skill in engineering, to stick by the bank of the river all the way. On the right side of the river the hills appeared, but they were not yet very romantic. They displayed, how-

ever, a fine variety of woods, villages, cattle, &c. No grapes were as yet to be seen.

We found our inn at Les Rosieres, one of the poorest we had yet seen; but we managed to procure an excellent eel for our supper; and the sentence of passing the night *altogether* in one chamber, was not now so fearful a one as it had at first been deemed. Habit, in this case, had produced its usual effects.

In the morning, the wind was announced to be pretty fair; and the light disclosed to us, that we were now entering upon a much more picturesque country than that which we had passed. We were on the left bank of the river, according to our progress upward, — which has been already mentioned as flat; but opposite there was a most enchanting view. The hills had become very high, and romantically shaped; the peasants' houses, unlike those of Brittany, were small neat-looking habitations, embowered in wood, and with little white-washed fronts peeping out from the midst of the green. They were hung about the hills here in the prettiest manner imaginable. A village church was perched upon the very top of a

circular elevation, covered with wood, and had a most fantastic, yet highly pleasing effect.

We started from Les Rosieres for Saumur, with a fair wind, but a very bad day. A person, who collected what are called the direct contributions, asked if we would give him and his money-bags a passage to Saumur, to which we readily consented. He furnished another instance of the extreme ignorance of the French people. In the course of conversation, he asked us if England had any *cavalry* of her own, or whether she did not wholly trust to that of her allies in her military operations. This notion, we found, arose out of the general idea that England could scarcely be called a military power. "You are great at sea," was this person's remark; "but on the land you do not shine." It was of no use to speak to him of Spain or Waterloo; he knew nothing of the facts of these; and had heard something about *treason.*

Yet this person was a royalist. He described the southern side of the Loire as devotedly royal, it being in the immediate neighbourhood of La Vendee; the

north side he said was suspicious. By his account, however, the French public in this part were rapidly becoming converts to the royal government; and he spoke of their sufferings as fairly and palpably to be traced to Buonaparte. Our exactions, he said, are now very heavy; but the people here are every day finding out that they have only to blame the man who has gone. He said, he supposed we had no country in England so beautiful as that before us; and when we assured him that the landscape would not compare with the choice rural beauties of England, he evidently did not believe us. France, he said, was the most beautiful country in the world, and the banks of the Loire were the most beautiful part of France.

We had not long left Les Rosieres, before a sudden squall of wind threw our boat upon its side, the large sail lying flat in the water, which rushed in upon us. We certainly were in most imminent danger; and the men did not wish, or were not able to conceal it. The sail, however, was got in, and, excepting the fright, we sustained no injury. This squall was the last of the fair

wind: we got again to our old trade of poking, and crawling along: never out of the willow thickets, we seemed so many water-rats scrambling up the river.

We came to what we had supposed at a distance was a fine château, or castle. As we arrived nearer, we observed that it looked very desolate, and the sailors told us, it was an uninhabited convent. It was quite deserted, and nothing living was to be seen near it. Yet it seemed well calculated for all the purposes of life. There was glass as yet in most of the windows. The doors were in their places; and, as we passed, we could just glance into the empty rooms. A gentleman of Nantes had bought it for the value of the land about it, the building not being considered worth any additional sum on its own account. Nothing could be more melancholy than its look: a fine, large, grand-looking building, unoccupied and unemployed, standing close to the rolling river, without affording the sound or sign of life to be wafted down its current. It seemed as if it held out a place of refuge for a family of outcasts, who might within its walls, among its spacious and

numerous rooms, find a place of security and shelter, without violating any right or property, or committing any intrusion upon the convenience or the privileges of others.

The hills were now covered with vines, and the cottages of the vignerons had a very pleasant appearance. The river, for the last twenty miles, had taken a southerly course, and the farther we proceeded towards Saumur, the scenery became more and more beautiful. The rocks on which the vines grew, were of a very soft nature, and the peasants had scooped these into houses, so that very frequently you saw windows and doors in the face of the precipice; and a person walking on the top, might look down the chimney. The day became fine, and notwithstanding the little progress we were making, we were highly pleased with our voyage.

Saumur stood full in view; with its castle nobly perched above the town. But long did we see it before we reached its precincts. The river ran here in a straight line for upwards of six miles; and it took us several hours to conquer six miles, creeping among the

willows. About two o'clock we arrived at the quay, and found a very pretty small town, situated in a very beautiful country. The rocks above it are covered with vines, and are also cut out into houses, so that the chimnies of the town's people almost touch the doors of the vignerons above them. The quays of Saumur, which, in France, mean the broad-paved banks of the river, are very beautiful. The town is seated on the southern side of the river, and a long and fine bridge crosses the Loire, forming a communication with the post-road on the other side. Every thing about Saumur seemed to speak of tranquillity. The face of nature about it was fair and quiet; and the weather is generally mild and clear in this neighbourhood.

A row of small houses, at the outside of the town, is occupied by a number of women, who make the strings of rosaries, used in the Catholic worship. I understood that Saumur supplied the greater part of France with these articles. The principle of the division of labour, seemed here to be thoroughly understood. In one house the women were cutting the willow wands into small

pieces about three-fourths of an inch long; in the next, they were turning these bits of wood into beads, in the next they fitted them with brass plating, and their neighbours finally strung the prepared articles into a necklace. These women were all at work for a few merchants who had possessed themselves of the general rosary trade in France, and who allowed them two francs or three francs for the gross, that is to say, for the part which each performed in the preparation of a gross. It seemed a very pleasant and suitable employment for women, but they complained it was very poorly paid: there had been a time, they said, when twelve francs were given instead of three. I said to them, that I had heard religion was increasing in France, and the trade of rosaries, I thought, ought to keep pace with it. The women replied, I know not how truly, that the demand for these pious matters was now much greater than it had been; but the wicked merchant rather lowered than raised his prices. Be that as it may, the manufacture is the cause of giving an air of cheerful industry to the suburb of Saumur, which is extremely agreeable. The

women, at this light work, all sit at their doors or windows, or frequently out in the street under vine trees; nothing can be prettier than the general effect, particularly as the noble Loire almost washes their homes; so that the crowd appears seated on its banks. Such a multitude of white caps, the buz of the chattering of so many women, the noise of their small turning lathes, the activity of their hands, the little scenes of coquetry and gaiety with the passing boatmen, all conspire to render the spectacle more cheerful and striking than I can easily describe.

We were told that, from Saumur, we should find the wind fair; but the wind generally shifted to thwart us. Our poor men had to work like slaves up to Cannes, a small village on the southern side of the river, distant from the Pont de Cé sixteen leagues, and from Tours fourteen. We reached it in the evening, so that we made in two days forty-eight miles, almost all the way against an impetuous current, and a strong wind. In the inn at Cannes, there were six children lying ill of the small-pox, and the landlady had lost a fine girl of four-

teen by the disease a few days before. She wept bitterly when she told us the circumstance, and said she did not know why the good God had done it; but she supposed he had his reasons. This is a literal translation of her words. Yet of this woman, I am sorry to say, we cannot speak well; we had a young boy with us, who might not have had the small-pox, and we found she had given strict orders in the house that no one should mention the disease in our hearing; it was not till the next morning that we discovered the complaint of which her daughter died, and her other children were ill. Moreover, finding that we showed some interest in her affliction, she thought she might take the liberty to overcharge us in her bill to a degree greater almost than we had ever experienced in France.

The country continued, or rather increased, its beauty up to Candes. The hill immediately above this village presents a most superb view. The landscape round is covered with vines, and, in the valley, the great stream of the Loire seems to divide. The Vienne river joins the Loire at Candes; and to us, who were coming

up, it seemed as if this were the point of their division: the Loire turns north to Tours, the Vienne southward, round the hills. The south side of the Loire is now no longer mountainous, but the north becomes more so, and for the rest of our way we sought our romantic views on the opposite side to that where they had been before discoverable. An old peasant found me climbing the wall of a vineyard, above Candes, about four o'clock in the morning, one of the most beautiful mornings I ever saw: I had taken an hour from my bed to look about me a little, before setting off in the boat, and the top of the wall offered the promise of an advantageous position for seeing the country. He saluted me very courteously, and begged to know if I was not a stranger. I told him I was an Englishman. "Ah, an Englishman! We have heard here much of the English, but none of them have come our way before. Do you travel for your *affairs* (business)?" "No, I come here to look at your charming country." "What! all the way from England, to look at this country! Mon Dieu!" It would have been impossible to

have made the matter any clearer to the old French peasant's comprehension, so I did not try. He told me that the people about this part of the country were in general very poor and very miserable; but they hoped for better days. Then, in the ornamental style of his country, he added, "Ah, Sir, if it were not for hope, what would be life?" He tottered down the hill after he had made me a very low bow, and I caught, for some time, his aged rustic figure glancing and moving among the vine leaves and projections of rock.

On descending, I found the boatmen waiting, and all the party ready. The morning was delicious, warm yet fresh; the trees hung down upon the river; the wind was quite fair, and we rippled over their leaves as we cut the water. As the breeze freshened we soon proceeded very rapidly, and our boatmen gave us reason to hope that we should sleep at Tours. This was the third day from our leaving Angers, and if it should complete our voyage, we acknowledged that we should have no reason to abuse the mode of travelling we had adopted.

The boat continued to pursue her way

steadily and swiftly; she might perhaps force herself through the current, advancing at the rate of four miles, or four miles and a half an hour. This, considering the strength of the flooded river, was doing great things. The rocks, as I have stated, now appeared on our left hand, and they were also, like the others, covered with vines, among which we saw the scooped-out houses of the peasants, who may be said to live *in* the rock, and *upon* the rock. We passed a number of very pretty small towns, all, to appearance, extremely dull and inactive, but affording the few necessaries wanted by a population of vignerons. At some of these we landed, and found scarcely a soul stirring in any of the streets. The houses seemed all falling into decay; the gardens all overgrown; many of the shops shut. Life was stagnant in them; yet, thus it had been for years they said, and they contrived to get on, for their wants were but few.

Langeais is one of these places: nothing can be imagined more beautiful than its situation; nothing more heartless than its interior. There is a post-house at this place;

yet we were obliged to leave it without procuring a dinner! The fruit sent from here, particularly the melons, bears a very high estimation in France.

For once the wind seemed to have determined contrary. Shortly after leaving Langeais, the three spires of Tours appeared, though still at a very considerable distance. It was, however, but a right line of water all the way up to them; the river here running straight for upwards of ten miles. About five o'clock in the afternoon the breeze failed us, and at six *it blew down the river!* We had still five miles between us and Tours; fortunately, however, we were now on the side of the road, which runs here close to the water, and our men could hawl the boat without much interruption. This they did till we were within about a mile and a half of our destination; when our further progress, being much obstructed by the craft lying along the river, we agreed to sleep at the small village at which we had arrived, and walk into Tours the next morning.

NOTE. — *A chasm here occurs in the narrative, which cannot be filled up from the posthumous papers of the author; and which every reader will doubtless lament most sincerely as*

HIATUS *VALDE* DEFLENDUS!

* * * *

Monday, 23d Nov. 1818.—Left Calais in the new diligence on two wheels, at ten in the morning. I had for my compagnon de voyage for five leagues; a young man who had been twelve years in the military service, and was now in the gendarmerie, attached to the person of the king. Their business is to attend the hunting parties of the princes, &c. He had fought against us at Waterloo, in the corps of lancers; and he said that his regiment had destroyed almost every man in the English regiment

which it charged: When I put the question to him directly, whether our cavalry had not the advantage in the day, generally speaking, he seemed to allow that it had. He enquired, rather eagerly, in what language our officers spoke of the French troops. "In very high terms," I replied; "they admire your bravery, particularly that of your officers, who are seen devoting themselves to the most imminent danger, to encourage their men." "Ah!" he answered immediately, "it was only by treachery that you had the best of it at Waterloo." This answer to what I had just said, which is quite in the common style, may serve to give an idea of French politeness at present, as well as of the delicacy of of feeling which actuates their manners. "Monsieur," I replied, "that point can never be settled between us, as it rests entirely on the assertion of one party, and argument seems to have nothing to do with it. But there is at least this difference between an English and a French officer, that the former, when he has the worst of it, never lays his defeat to the account of treachery, but is very unqualified in his criticism

of the faults committed on his own side." He did not appear to take the intention in which this was said, but answered, "Yes, Sir, that is true; you never allege treachery; but the French at present are so interested, you may buy any man in France." Of all the expressions of opinion that I have heard in this country, no one has been repeated so frequently, and so generally, by persons of all parties, conditions, and circumstances, as this testimony to the existence of an universal spirit of selfishness in France. That nothing has influence on a Frenchman but money, is said by all; and republicans as well as royalists, Buonapartists as well as Bourbonists, generally agree in representing this as a change showing itself in the French character since the revolution. The man returning by Mount Saint Bernard to Italy, whom I met at Orbe, said the same. The fact may give rise to many speculations. The revolution destroyed religion, and abolished the aristocracy, and all the illusions, feelings, and distinctions connected with nobility. What is man without these two sources of enthusiastic sentiment? Little better than the plucked cock

of Diogenes, which he called the man of Plato: stripped of all his plumage, he is but a poor and shivering animal. A critic in a French periodical work says, "Sur-tout nous ferons bien de puiser à pleine coupe." My young soldier, speaking of the British troops stationed in France, which were then embarking at Calais, said, that the whole country were unanimous as to their exemplary conduct; and added, "We French should have behaved very differently. I was taken prisoner in retreating from Holland in 1814, when the allies were advancing. In our retreat our soldiers broke open the houses of the peasants, and murdered them for amusement. Generally speaking, our men conduct themselves like brigands, but you preserve a very strict discipline." My landlord at Calais, who is secretary to the military governor of the place, said that our men behaved "like angels." He was astonished how such exemplary discipline could be maintained. The number of wives and children accompanying the soldiers, astonished the French of all classes. "It would not be so with our troops," they said. At the same time,

it must be confessed that petty thefts were committed by the British soldiers; in which case they were severely flogged; a punishment at which the French expressed horror, amazement, and disgust. Yet how, with such subjects as soldiers, preserve the discipline which they admire, without the punishment at which they revolt? The question is a difficult one to solve, yet nothing can be more clear, than that the French soldier, being exempted from such treatment, occupies a high and more honourable place in the scale of humanity; and those who hear foreigners describing in language of horror and disgust an English military flogging, are placed in the most painful of situations, and one which they must feel to be degrading. In such a case, they cannot but regard the custom with abhorrence, and in their shame they will be inclined to demand its total abolition, as a disgrace for which no advantage can compensate. My conductor from Besançon to Pontarlier spoke with abhorrence of the German practice of beating the soldiers; said the French would not bear this; and

asked me if the English soldier was beaten? I did not know what to answer.

Tuesday, 24th. — Arrived at Paris at nine o'clock in the evening. At Boulogne, the day before, we took into the diligence an Irish lady and her two sons, fashionable, fine-looking young men. She was a lady of most respectable manners and appearance, who had been living two years in Paris with her whole family, for the sake of having masters of first-rate talents in the elegant accomplishments at a cheaper rate than she could in England. She seemed, however, to be the possessor of an adequate fortune: her house and estate, she told me, were on the banks of the lake of Killarney. She spoke of the beauty of the scenery in the highest terms of admiration, and said she had herself seen, and known a person from England, *who became deranged* from the effect which the first view of the lake had on his feelings. She had been intimate with Curran, who had been her visitor, and she spoke of his death. She assured me that both she and her whole family felt the want of heart, and family-comfort in France, and that their attachment to their country

had only been strengthened by their absence from it. I said, I was very glad to hear that such had been the effect in her case, but added, that I was afraid the opposite sentiment was too often produced in the minds of the English residents in Paris. She agreed it was so, and expressed her astonishment that it should be so. She recognized a countryman in an old man in the diligence, who spoke French as a Frenchman. It turned out that he was indeed an Irishman, but had been thirty years away from his country, during twenty of which he had been a resident in the French settlement of Cayenne. He was still as red-hot a wild Irishman, as if he had been an actor in all the political disturbances of late years. He inveighed bitterly against the union, said it was the object of the English government to keep Ireland in a state of ruin and starvation, and declared it was impossible for him to think of living in his native land, for he could not bear to see the people experiencing such extreme misery as he had witnessed during a short visit which he had recently paid to it. The lady of fortune intimated gently, that the poor people, she thought,

were very *happy and contented*, and it was striking enough to observe how difference of circumstances influenced the mind in this, as it does in so many other instances, to the opposite extremes of opinion. Nothing is wanted for comedy, tragedy, and farce, but an observation of actual occurrences and characters, and the skill to give them a little dressing for public exhibition. We had with us materials for comedy and farce that were apparent—tragedy usually lies in the heart, and requires something to draw it forth—it existed too with us, as *I* knew well—but no one was inclined to disclose what part he had in it. Our farce was supplied by one of the young sons of the above lady, and by another young man, who seemed a compound of fool, puppy, and knave. When he came into the coach, he opened his purse to show us that he had six Napoleons in it; pulled out a common map of the road, to show that he travelled with all the requisites and luxuries befitting a gentleman; and told us that he had been fined 30 francs by the French police for thrashing his servant, who had made a mistake in carrying a parcel of grapes to a

young lady. The 30 francs, it appeared, he had not paid, and altogether, it appeared, that he was one of those Englishmen, who, from necessity and want of principle, leave very bad impressions of our country wherever they travel abroad. The young Irishman had all the easy sauciness of an amiable lad of fortune, — spoke broken French to the conductor and coachman, and to the mam'selles by the road side, in a most whimsical style. The elder brother, who was of a graver cast, seemed to be his mother's darling.

On my arrival in Paris, I went to the Hotel de Bouloy, where I had been with my wife and my dear boy in the month of July 1816, stopping there at our first coming from Orleans; and in the month of November following we *lost him!* I slept in the next chamber to that which we then occupied.

Wednesday, Thursday, 25th and 26th. — These two days I spent at Paris.

Friday, 27th. — I left Paris in the evening, in the diligence of the Messagerie establishment which goes to Besançon, distant 100 leagues from Paris, — travelled all night.

Saturday, 28th. — Supped at Troyes — travelled all night.

Sunday, 29th. — Arrived at Dijon at half-past ten at night, slept there till three in the morning, when we were wakened to start at four.

Monday, 30th. — Reached Besançon in the evening, being the fourth day from Paris. My companions were, a young garde du corps of nineteen, who had nothing interesting about him but his good looks; a lame old maid who spoke of her mama, and who was a sort of French blue-stocking, with more levity and less learning than an English one; and a poor miserable woman, who seemed to have been visited with most sorts of real misfortunes, and to take a pleasure in fancying additional ones. She was very poor, and travelled to Dijon almost without eating. The old maid excited her choler once by correcting her language, which gave occasion to many remarks on persons of education, who made slight of those who had none. The lame miss, however, was certainly a clever sort of person, — spoke of politics judiciously enough, but with a strong leaning against liberty, — of

literature not foolishly, — and on all subjects at least fluently. We took up a young woman and her child to go a small distance. She afforded us a good deal of amusement by commencing, on the moment of her coming into the carriage, which happened to be in the night, a glowing eulogy of Mr. Sens and his voiture. She repeated the name of Mr. Sens so often, that we were at last tempted to inquire who this excellent man was? He turned out to be the coachman of a slow and abject diligence, who drove her and her husband to Troyes, when they first went there. Her boy was a remarkable fine child of three years and a half old, and I bore the larger half of his weight during the night. The mother was quite a young creature, (whose husband had left Paris for Troyes in search of work as a carder of cotton,) full of ignorant simplicity. She was, however, vain of her voice, which was really a good one, and gave us many hints that she wished to be asked to sing a song, which she called "*Ferdinand*," and of which she kept continually talking to her child. At length, I made the request in form, and supported it by compliments

and entreaties. She yielded, "nothing loath," and Ferdinand turned out to be a long and stupid ballad of twenty-four verses, which she sang, and of three more which she made many apologies for forgetting. Afterwards we had a young man's confession of his sins, written, she said, by one of her husband's friends, who meant one day to have it printed. On our arrival at Troyes, she exclaimed, "Ah! my boy, now we are at Troyes, in *Champagne!*" with an expression as if it were the utmost limits of the earth. In the cabriolet, there was a rude, coarse, merry, interested-looking Frenchman, who seemed to entertain a bitter hatred against England and Englishmen. He said France had so improved the manufacture of sugar from beet-root, that nothing was wanted but a total prohibition of colonial sugar, as an encouragement of the manufacturer. France ought to prohibit every article whatever that came from England, for England prohibited *every* article that could be sent from France! At Troyes, occurred an instance of the ignorant credulity so common with the French people, and almost always on the side of faction. A commercial traveller

would not believe that Buonaparte ever embarked for England at La Rochelle, adding that he was at Nantes at the time, and must have heard of it; at the same time, he was very sure that the late news in the English papers indicated that he had escaped. The conductor of the diligence meeting his brother conductor, they agreed that these reports relative to the isle of St. Helena had produced a visible effect on commerce, and cursed him for a *gueux*. At Dijon, we dropped our sensible and talking lady, who by the bye, told me that she had had the honour of conversing with Lord Castlereagh, and that he spoke French fluently, but with a very English idiom. At Dôle, we took in the sous-préfet of Baume and his wife. The lady was much younger than him; had been married eight months, and was very much inclined to be gallant.

Tuesday and Wednesday 1st and 2d December.— Remained at Besançon. On Tuesday night saw Mademoiselle Georges in the part of Lady Macbeth, in Ducis's (*not Shakspeare's !*) tragedy of Macbeth. The cry was universal against the piece. "Ce sont des horreurs Anglaises," said the com-

mandant of the place to the préfet, in my hearing, they being in the next box. A set of commercial travellers, young men, among whom I found myself at the Hôtel National, were of the same opinion. "Quelle mauvaise pièce!" — "C'est un tissue d'horreurs d'un bout à l'autre." They were perfectly right; a worse piece I never saw; but it is all their own; none of it is ours. (Bill at Hôtel National 18 frs. and at the first Hôtel to which I went 7 frs.)

Thursday, 3d. — Went from Besançon to Pontarlier in the courier's car. (Bill at Pontarlier five francs, for tea, bed, and breakfast.)

Friday 4th. — Walked from Pontarlier to Orbe; found my old host and hostess; he who had been servant to Sir Gilbert Heathcote. Bill here 5 francs, for tea, bed, and breakfast.

Saturday 5th. — Reached Lausanne by the courier's car; went to my old inn, La Couronne, where I have left a parcel of books, &c. waiting my return. Bill at Lausanne 7 fr. 15 sols for dinner and bed.

Sunday 6th. — Started at five in the morning from Lausanne, having taken my place

to Milan. Place cost me 78 francs; my baggage, being 30lbs. over the 30lbs. which they allow, 18 francs; I mean French francs; in addition, the postillions are a very heavy charge on this road; one sol and a half a league to Brieg; and from Brieg to Domo D'Ossola, that is to say passing the Simplon, the fee is three sols a league for the postillion. After passing St. Maurice there is also the conductor to pay. You may count postillion and conductor 3fr. 10s. a day; for the four days and a half one is going to Milan, say 15fr. 10s.; or, as there are other charges, such as ferry at Lago Maggiore, say 20fr. added to the above. At Vevey, breakfasted on a trout and tea, paid 2f. 5c. Met here with a well-informed man, who had rational views, and who observed that liberty was making great progress in France, and ought to do so. He described the people of the Pays de Vaud as very happy; contributions almost nothing; soil fertile; government not felt; all trained to arms. "We were glad," said he, "to be free of the men of Berne, for they were our masters; though not severe, yet still our masters." In France, he said, the national cha-

racter is much worse, because the people have always been more miserable. The peasants here, he said, are almost all proprietors, or have half the produce of the vineyard for the trouble of cultivating it: the best land for vines fetches 11 or 12,000 francs an arpent, a little more than an acre. Left the diligence behind me at Vevey, and walked to Saint Maurice, where we were to sleep, which is a distance of about seven leagues. The scenery about Montreux is charming. Rousseau, as was suggested to me, probably only took Clarens for the sake of its name. The village of Montreux is much more beautiful. I was particularly struck with the Amphitheatre of the Jura, and the paths at various heights for the advantage of the view; cottages, castles, churches, and villages, interspersed in the landscape. The basin of the lake, down into which one looks, forms a lovely feature. The scenery is the same as when Rousseau saw it, but all other things how changed! and in these changes what food for the speculation of a mind like his! It was Sunday. While I was regarding a beautiful cottage below the church, and a small terrace-garden, — small enough to be

happy, — a spot hid from the storms of life, the sound of psalm-singing broke out from the church . . . . . I afterwards heard bells coming down the Alpine glens. Byron, as well as Rousseau, has rendered this scenery famous. The Château of Chillon has become a monument of his genius; the arms of the Pays de Vaud are painted like a playing card on its walls. The Swiss soldiers have a flat and bourgeois air; they are somewhat midway between feudals and train-bands; their costume is like that of the knave of clubs. The view, looking back from the end of the lake at Villeneuve, is fine; the castle interesting from its idle uselessness; — the times are gone when it was of service. The country has latterly been exempt from the agitations of Europe. The lake here ends. Ravines run up between the mountains as if to tempt the imagination. The scenery produces a stern impression on the mind. It seems as if such striking objects could not be there for nothing. Hence the ancients worshipped sylvan deities, the genii of the groves. Clouds passing between, and above, and below the hills,

have the effect of stage-scenery. Certainly of the two I would rather see it on a cloudy day than on a clear one; — fronts of rock bursting out from the rolling cloud; then covered; — seas of vapour resting; then dispersing; — thus producing indistinctness, variety, infinity ..... The road after leaving the lake is less interesting for some time; but, at Saint Maurice, becomes again highly curious. The position of this place is remarkable. The Valais, which here commences, is shut in as by a gate: the rock and the Rhone render the passage so narrow. They are singular sentries. The Rhone runs in a deep bed; a perpendicular and stupendously high rock presents itself on entering the town. The country shows traces every where to convince us that the vicissitudes of the earth itself are here not confined to remote epochs, but that the last great general convulsion has left it on unsettled foundations; yet here are houses built just below one of the most fearful precipices. A carriage can scarcely pass. The traveller does not feel at ease — a stone descending would be destruction. I slept

here; and paid for supper and bed four francs.

Monday, 7th. — Left St. Maurice at four in the morning, by the courier. The Valais bears every mark of a miserable country. The wretchedness of the inhabitants indicates an ungrateful soil. The physiognomy quite changed. At Martigny saw signs of the late devastation. Sion an ancient town: paid here two francs for my dinner. Poor villages on rocks. From Sion the road becomes more interesting; Leuk to the left, near Mont Gemmi; heart of the Alps; fine cascade near Leuk. * * * * * * Young men drilling; château with towers, as if to defend against an attack on the gooseberry bushes. The colour of the coats of the Valaisans in harmony with their dirty miserable looks. Arrived at Brieg, at the foot of the Simplon, at eight o'clock in the evening, twenty-one leagues from Saint Maurice: paid three francs for coffee and bed.

Tuesday, 8th.—Left Brieg, at the foot of the Simplon, at four in the morning. Mounted the three first leagues in the dark.

About seven in the morning I got out and walked. In the grey of the morning I saw that the road was winding along the side of an immense mountain, with a deep ravine below, in which I heard water, and immense forests of firs above, in which the wind was making mournful music. We were just then crossing a compact strong-built bridge, over a gulf of eighty feet in depth. A few minutes afterwards we arrived at one of the houses of refuge, which were placed at certain distances by the makers of the road, to give reception to travellers whose horses might be spent, or who, in bad weather, might be unable to proceed, from the accidents of water, snow, or falling stones. They are all numbered. On this was written, Refuge, No. 3. There are, I think, seven of them, and some larger desolate-looking buildings besides on the Italian side, for receiving carts and merchandize in case of need. At the Refuge, No. 3. there is also the relay of post horses; and you can have coffee in summer, and brandy in winter. A man was lighting a fire in the first room, which looked something like a strong-room in a prison, after Howard's

plan. He asked me to go into the chambre chaude, and opened a door, from whence a suffocating air came forth. A kind of narrow trough is built into the wall, where wood is put and lighted: the heat diffuses itself through the stone. Our horses having eaten their grain, we proceeded on our ascent, which is very equal; sufficient to make the horses walk, but by no means fatiguing. The windings are beyond conception, and you are placed by them frequently in a position so as to look back upon the spiral line you have been pursuing, lying like a bordering of ribbon, on the mighty sides of the vast mountain. You see the houses of refuge below you, dwindled to points; and can scarcely discover the cabins, dispersed at little distances up and down, where lived the French engineers when employed in making the road. Opposite, that is to say, on the other side of the deep ravine and torrent, which forms the bottom of the immense precipice, on the very border of which your carriage proceeds, with only small stones for a fence, and sometimes nothing, is the old road over the Simplon. It was not practicable for carriages; and, to

look at it, like a line amongst frightful rocks, it would not seem safe for horses. The general characteristics of the road on the Valais side, are forests of fir above and below, generally a precipice, and the sound of water, frequently a torrent, falling from above, and carried below the road by excellently built aqueducts. Once or twice the turning of the road is sufficiently favourable to open on the view of the traveller the whole length of the ravine, from his feet to the very bottom of the mountain, with the town of Brieg, the valley of the Rhone, and its blue stream, at an immeasurable distance, rendered in effect still greater than it is in reality, by the circumvolving line of road lying like coils all the way down the lofty Alps surrounding the valley on that side. These views are of extreme beauty. At many places, the firs above and below stand in the most grotesque positions, and present the most battered appearances, from having had to sustain the shock of avalanches, or of falling rocks. How withered, desolate, and wild they appear! One or two had been broken in the middle, but not broken off quite, and were

lying creaking in the wind, supporting themselves on the others. The sun lights up the snowy tops of the Alps, of a beautiful golden colour. The clouds of early morning roll among the hills, and take a silver hue, betwixt water and fleece. As you advance towards the summit of the road, you pass close under the glacier of Kaltwasser, from whence several cascades descend; and, on the other hand, you see the glaciers that lie on the highest points of the Simplon. If there is snow on the mountain, as there was when I passed, the glacier renders itself discernible by the blue colour of its ice. The absolute height of the mountain is said to be 6174 feet above the level of the sea: the highest point of the road is probably about 5000. As you approach the top, the wind blows fierce from the summit. There is a house from whence a rather genteel female, a Frenchwoman, came out. Her husband is the engineer appointed to watch the state of the road, and also to collect certain duties payable on goods entering the Valais from Sardinia. We shortly afterwards met him coming from the hospital, where he had

been attending mass. After descending a little, you see the hospital, a high, narrow, wild-looking building, placed below you on the right. A new one, on the new road, has been begun, but is left with only the first story raised. There are only two priests stationed at the hospital, to receive travellers. They shelter the poor for nothing: they give them bread, meat, and wine, with a bed when needful. The rich are not solicited, but give. It is out of their own funds that the fathers do this, with very little assistance from the government. Descending still, we arrived at the village of Simplon, at a height of 4,548 feet above the level of the sea. The snow here was very deep, and lies at least six months of the year. The inn at the post, very passable. Paid for a scanty dinner 2fr. 10s. The family had been at mass, and had just come in. The daughters, good-looking girls. I might here quote what Peter Radel says, and remark on the girls being French, and as proficient in gallantry as if at Paris. The houses, scattered among the rocks and trees of this vast and sterile mountain, have a miserable appearance. We wonder how

human life can be found in such places; and the view of these poor cabins, where men and women like ourselves drag out forty, fifty, sixty, seventy years of life—where children are born to go through the same, prompts disheartening reflections on the variety of human conditions. Dined at the Simplon: dinner, 2fr. 10s.

The distance from Brieg to the village of the Simplon, is eight leagues, of which six are ascent, two descent; from the Simplon to Domo D'Ossola, at the bottom of the mountain on the Italian side, the distance is between six and seven leagues, making the passage of the mountain between fourteen and fifteen leagues. The journey may be easily performed in eleven or twelve hours. It is with reference to this side that we may most suitably speak of the wonders of this great work. The Italian engineers had by far the most difficult task to perform. At every step we see evidence of the prodigious struggle between the art of man, and the obduracy and power of nature in her most savage holds. The road may be said to be entirely cut into the solid rock; and yet never, or scarcely ever, among these

prodigious precipices and cliffs that suspend destruction, does it hasten or slacken its equal slope. The galleries or passages through the heart of rocks on the Valais side, though wonderful, are as nothing when compared with those on the Italian side. You enter the rock, are enclosed in it on both sides, and over head, but pursue a road as smooth and more broad than that without. Soon after leaving the village of the Simplon, two considerable mountain-torrents, rushing by two frightful openings into the unknown seclusions of the Alps, form by their union the *Véniola*, which ranks between a river and a torrent as to size, and which goes rushing and roaring and tumbling amongst rocks and huge stones, close by the side of the road, to within a league of Domo D'Ossola, where the road crosses it on a superb bridge, and afterwards leaves it. Sometimes it washes the road — sometimes sinks to a frightful depth beneath it, while from the windows of your carriage you see the white foam of its boiling eddies. On the two sides, the stupendous mountain rises in perpendicular walls of black rock, and huge masses are

frequently suspended over the head of the traveller, who, seeing around the tremendous fragments that *have* fallen, cannot with reason dismiss the apprehension that others *may* fall. Indeed they do fall, and lives have been lost; but as this is not of frequent occurrence, we go through the obvious scene of these natural casualties, speculating on their improbability. Their probability is in the ratio of once in ten years, and we go through in a day. On the other side, footpaths frightfully suspended lead into the interior of the Alps, where hamlets are hung upon crags, and where it is difficult to divine the occupation and resources of the inhabitants. Picturesque but crazy bridges sometimes cross the torrent from these paths, forming a striking contrast with those masterpieces of modern engineering, of which the new road furnishes so many examples. On looking to the wild and terrific scene around, — rocks a thousand feet high, closing in over head, — a boiling torrent roaring and undermining below, — buttresses of granite projecting out from the precipice, and hanging over the water, — cascades tumbling down

to join it from the highest peaks above, (some of them very fine) — the traveller cannot conceive the possibility that his progress can continue through so many obstacles; yet it does: the road runs along, preserving the same equal slope, sometimes supported by a wall over the water, sometimes scooped into the side of the mountain, sometimes running boldly into the very heart of the rock, meeting darkness, and emerging victoriously into light. The longest gallery of the whole has three openings, for the sake of light, which permit a view down the precipice into the river. It is indeed a prodigious work. The stone is, for the most part, solid and compact, and equally and smoothly cut. We see the marks in the stone where the pistols have set fire to the trains of powder. After passing the miserable village of Gondo, a small chapel indicates the spot where we quit the Valais, and enter the territory of the King of Sardinia. The traveller is now in Italy, and will feel this according to his temperament and his state in life. I should have felt it more forcibly *once*. The dress of the peasants immediately changes. It is

very wretched in the Valais; it now becomes more like the costume which prints and pictures represent as that of the peasant of the Italian Alps. Blue jackets, trimmed with red, blue stockings, with red on the sides, &c. The women have ample breasts and hips; they wear small round black head-dresses. At Isella, three leagues from the village of the Simplon, there is the Sardinian custom-house, where the traveller's effects are liable to be searched. The officers seemed as poor and wretched as possible, and 20 sols purchased me a total exemption from the trouble of opening my trunks. For a moment, the gorge in which the road runs, becomes less savage, and expands a little to give place to the picturesque village of Divédro; the site and appearance of which are most romantic; having passed it, however, the valley again contracts, and becomes even more wild than ever. An immense slope of mountain is covered by the most grotesque trees, that look as if smitten by witchcraft. There is a *sentiment* in their appearance to this effect. ******* I think, in articles on art, explains sentiment in this sense. A magnificent column, cut of one

stone, lies by the side of the road; it was in the act of being transported to Milan, to be erected in honour of Napoleon, at the gate of the Simplon; it now lies on its carriage, to be confounded with the rocks from which it has been cut, when time and neglect shall have covered it with moss. At the village of Crevola, where, as I have said, the road crosses the mountain river on an elegant bridge, it leaves the mountain of the Simplon, and issues from the long gorge into the plain. The mountain is now crossed, and the wonders of the road cease: nothing for the future is left to admire but its goodness. It was at this termination of the gorge, called Val-Divédro, that, according to Ebel's Itinerary of Switzerland, the inhabitants of the Valais fought a bloody battle against the Milanese, and gained it, in 1487. The women of Domo D'Ossola, he observes, took a frightful vengeance on the men of Milan for the treatment which they had received from them. Domo D'Ossola is a league from this spot, and at this town the traveller usually stops. He is now in a flat, surrounded by the noble Alps; against their skirts, amidst woods, and on

small diversified eminences, he sees (what strikes him as a strange sight, issuing as he is from so wild a country) numbers of scattered houses, of an elegant appearance, which give an inexpressible charm to the landscape. They are country houses, built by persons of the Valais, and of the country of Domo D'Ossola, who have made money n England, France, and elsewhere, by various industrious pursuits, and who, smitten with that love of their native country, for which these mountaineers are so famous, retire hither, build themselves houses, and end their days in obscurity, but ease. Nobody knew them, when I asked. The government affords no functions to persons in such a situation, enough to make them something in society; regular *employés* are the only persons whom it trusts; so that it, as well as others, are totally without that intertwisted ramification of social structure, which, passing and repassing, and binding and entwining, in various levels and parts of the state, can alone constitute permanent strength. At this time, when so much is said of comparative *civilization*, one finds nothing any where at all approximating to

the numerous signs of its ancient standing in England; these are many and of every different species; take the country houses in France, and on the banks of the Lago Maggiore, and compare them with those in England: on the score of taste as well as of comfort; take inns, take carriages, take instruction; we do not enter here into any question, except that of civilization. How should the word be understood? What constitutes its perfection — its excess? if I do not much mistake as to the essential meaning of these things, England is the chief spot where they are to be found. At Domo D'Ossola, where I supped and slept, the master of the posts repeated a complaint which I found very general along the road, that the King of Sardinia would not permit a diligence to run right through from Geneva to Milan, founding his refusal on a wish to give preference to the road by Mount Cenis, which goes through his capital, Turin. Nothing can be more abominable than such a restriction, founded on a miserable system of old worn-out monopoly; it includes the two things most hateful to the world, ignorance and injustice. The people of Domo

D'Ossola have the more reason to complain of it, as, although ceded to the King of Sardinia by Maria Theresa, in return for services rendered to her, yet they preserved a species of independence which rendered them, in matters of internal administration, their own masters; and, to indicate this, they made a form of sending back his edicts, taking care at the same time to adopt them generally, as if they did not concern them. Since the late change of things, they are placed without help or consent under the crown of Sardinia, and, as they were not parties to the alteration, they surely have much reason to complain, that one of its fruits should be this forcible and most arbitrary restriction on the choice of travellers; to avoid which, you are not considered a regular diligence passenger farther than to Domo D'Ossola, and hence, for the rest of the road to Milan, you are liable to uncertainties and extra expences. The impolicy and enormity are the greater, inasmuch as the wonders of the Simplon, which strike the minds of the people with admiring awe, were at the same time a source of real and very considerable profit to this secluded

country in the time of Napoleon, by the influx of travellers, which was promoted by every advantage of travelling. A part of this bustle was owing to Milan's being the seat of government; but the facility of a regular diligence from Paris to Milan, by Geneva, was a great inducement. The prodigies of the road give a subject for enthusiastic eulogy, and the injustice practiced by the king of Sardinia furnishes the contrast. Nothing is said against the government, but "This was done by Napoleon,"—"this was effected by the French!" and the feeling shows itself in their eyes. Is it politic to add to the inevitable incapacity of such a government as the Sardinian for great things, such wilful unfairness? What must occupy the minds of the people when they pass the surprising road from Brieg to Sesta, made by Napoleon, and see nothing encouraged by their present king but the daubery of holy pictures on the houses. Governments are now called upon to pay great attention to such matters; old things are passed away, and all things are become new. You cannot speak to a postillion any more than to a savant without having proof

of this. It seems to be from a bad principle that an association of governments interfered with the particular administration of states that either belong to the alliance, or may be considered as in some measure subject to it; but, since something like such a principle of interference has been avowed at Congress, as a principle not for the moment but for continuance, constituting a sort of college of governments, exercising a high general inspection; however little we may approve of such a principle, if it exist, we should like to see it *well* applied. At Domo D'Ossola, the traveller enters on talian inns, which are as much worse than hose of France, as those of France are worse han those of the Pays de Vaud. He will find no sign of decent accommodation at the post-house at Domo D'Ossola, except the *prices* of the things, according to which they *ought to be* excellent. Bill at Domo D'Ossola, for coffee in the evening and bed, four francs; gave one franc to servant.

Wednesday, 9th. — Left Domo D'Ossola, at seven in the morning, alone, in a voiture open to all the skyey influences, and drawn by one horse. The regular diligence, or

rather courier, as I have said, going no further than Domo, and the courier with the letters not being permitted to take passengers, the post-masters from Domo to Milan find it a burthen to forward the passengers when there are but few. In my case there was but one, and the postillions expected me to pay so as to make up what they would have received, if there had been the proper quota: add to which, all sorts of extra demands are made upon you for passing a certain bridge, for the ferry at Sesta, &c. The road runs between the mountains, and is very level from Domo. You are gradually leaving the Alps, each hill being lower than the last; and as your distance increases, you see the enormous chain growing up behind you so formidably, that it appears impossible you could have passed it. Up to Baveno, about eight leagues from Domo, the road, though good, presents little of the striking; the scenery is picturesque, the sides of the hills being wooded, with castles and cottages intermixed; but at Baveno, the route suddenly comes upon the Lago Maggiore, in all its splendour, the Boromean islands full before you, and ro-

nfantic towns and villages strewing its sides. There is considerable commerce on the lake, so that the traveller generally sees a number of boats on its surface, which adds much to the liveliness of the effect. The men row standing, and the contrary way to what is customary with us. There is a good inn at the post-house, where, as the Boromean islands are objects to be visited, the traveller may stop. Every thing now assumes distinct Italian features; the men in the boats are the figures that one has seen on bed-curtains, with long-bodied short coats, breeches short at the knees, giving the appearance of long legs, flat crowned round hats, and long features. The houses take a different character also, a certain gaudiness as well as cleanliness of exterior, not seen in France; large courts, shut windows, and many of them ornamented with holy paintings plastered on the walls, which, in their style, though done by the commonest hands of the country, indicated that we were in a country of the fine arts. An Italian cast of head, devotional expression, a sort of primitive simplicity, such characterizes the works of Pietro di Perugino—made a strong

contrast between these and the signs of Paris, so clever in a different manner—quite different too from the English manner, and peculiar to the country. Chapels too, with lamps and images. It was after advancing a little from Baveno, that, for the first time, I saw a regular friar, such as Chaucer and Boccaccio describe. Monks I had seen at the Grande Chartreuse, but this was a downright sturdy friar, a mendicant capucin, one I suppose, by his appearance; with a rope twisted round his middle, bare dirty legs, and brawny withal; his face expressing cunning, impudence, and another quality, for which, if the Italian story-writers are to be believed, the class is justly renowned. Voltaire also speaks of the various fortunes of a capucin. Looking at this fellow upon the road, transported one back at least a century; it seemed as if one lived before the French revolution, and as if the adventures which we find in works of fiction, coupled with the appearance of such personages, might take place. Allowing the imagination to amuse itself in this kind of way, the friar's appearance might interest and please; but considering the world as it is,

and thinking of the newspapers, instead of Mrs. Radcliffe's novels, he appeared terribly out of place and time. Improvement is not like water, it does not instantly rush to its level; but now, that they are establishing Bell and Lancaster's schools in France, the friars, even in Piedmont, ought at least to have clean legs, and to have something of a decent appearance, as if connected with religion in respect to instruction and example. However, I should have been sorry if the thing had been utterly abolished before I came. A French writer on the social institutions of the present day, whose views are in general guided by a spirit of honourable moderation and sage philosophy, is nevertheless so misled by system, as to represent Protestantism as necessarily connected with civil disorder and the fall of governments; adding, that at present all thinking Protestants are for a union with the Romish church! and this while he is prompt to acknowledge, that society has arrived to that pitch of maturity, that representative government, the liberty of the press, and trial by jury, are absolutely necessary for it. How comes it that he does not see that the world has *grown out* of the

Romish belief, that its institutions have been raised from their foundations by the expansion of opinion, and that its garniture is gothic and ridiculous, instead of being venerable? The alternative, therefore, is between Protestantism and infidelity, as between revolution and constitutional liberty; and the countries where Protestantism is the religion, are the only ones where persons of intellect would dare to make a profession of belief. What member of the French academy would give a pious turn to a discourse on literature, the sciences, or the arts? Yet, I have just now before me Mr. Roscoe's discourse on the opening of the Liverpool institution, which I bought in Milan for two francs; and which, with many other works, either English, or translated from the English, I was very happy to see there; and in it I find a general train of reference to the truths of religion, and the immediate superintendance of a divine Providence. No literary man of the same liberal cast of sentiments, and belonging to the party corresponding in France to that of Mr. Roscoe's in England, but

would blush to make references now so obsolete. There is a fatality that attends the progress of philosophy in that country; emancipated from the influence of reverie in metaphysical inquiry. The system of Locke was embraced by them only to push farther its errors, and to render it more degrading. Tracey and Cabanis have followed his track, to a length which would have shocked him; and while philosophy in England and in Germany, (after curing, by Locke's system, the extravagant fancies of which France was the seat,) has resumed a loftier course, guided by experiment, it continues in France always a stage behind, and is yet busy ferreting amongst matter.

This, however, has led me away from the Lago Maggiore: its greatest length runs up amongst the mountains; it is but a corner that runs along the road that I am now following. Nothing can be more beautiful than the scenery, and the road is like a bowling green. Our carriage passed through three or four small neat towns on the margin of the water. The sides of the hills are covered with vines; and on the top of an

eminence near the road, is a colossal statue of a Count Boremo, whose nose shaded itself prodigiously in the setting sun, reminding one of the parody, "Her nose is like a promontory." Arrived opposite to the town of Sesta, situated on the other side of the Lago, which is here very narrow and almost at its end, the territories of the king of Sardinia finish, and, on crossing in the ferry-boat, you are in the Milanese, and under the Austrian government. Arrived at Sesta at half-past six in the evening; it is thirteen leagues from Domo D'Ossola. Paid for my dinner at Baveno three francs.

Thursday, 10*th*. — Left Sesta at half-past seven in the morning for Milan, distant eleven leagues. They put me into one of the slow voitures that go every day, and which was eleven hours in going the eleven leagues. Paid at Sesta four francs for coffee and bed — very dear — gave one franc to the waiter. Sesta is small and mean as a town, but commercial; from the lake to Milan, there is a communication by water. During the evening, I heard the boys and girls singing in the streets fine Italian airs; how different from those of France! An

English ear is struck by the inadequacy and incompleteness of the latter; but it is instantly regaled by those of Italy, though equally foreign as to place. The line of road betwixt Sesta and Milan bears certain cheerful substantial signs, which render an English traveller more at home, as it were, than he can have ever found himself in France. You meet, what you scarcely ever do in France, genteel people walking or riding as between one village and another. I was glad to see buildings, *scuoli communali*, common schools. The customary salutations are less violently polite than in France. A rounder, robuster character of people and of manners, is apparent. One meets an uncommon number of priests, it is true, but they are less a class apart than in France; there is no consciousness of humilation or degradation in their looks; no such mean ecclesiastical costume, giving so masquerade an appearance to a clergyman in France, but, on the contrary, good substantial cloaks, jolly, manly expression of face. The richness of the plain of Lombardy is well-known —every sign of cultivation and produce; the country well peopled, country-houses,

fine roads. Paid for my dinner, at a small place half-way between Sesta and Milan, 2 frs. 5 sols. Arrived at Milan at seven o'clock in the evening. Coming near the town, the postillion pointed out the unfinished gate of the Simplon, and said "Ah! if Napoleon had remained, all that would have been finished;" but, certainly, as the author of the work on Political Institutions says, Napoleon's despotism was well managed:—"le despotisme le mieux conçu et le plus savant qui ait jamais existé." It seems to have taken a strong hold of the minds of the multitude. These great works have quite dazzled them. This shews he was a good judge of men. Rousseau says, that to love liberty one must experience it. These people have never known it. Governments change, and to them the change is imperceptible as to their condition. What they see then is these great works; and it would seem further, that in general his administration was excellently adapted for supplying all sources of popularity except only those that a free government could give. But the want of this the people could not feel. Yet strange is the

outcry now for it, only an expression of discontent. For Savans and "phraseurs" he had lures, and also for traders and postillions. His system was therefore sublime in its way. I have heard nothing cited so often in his favour as the Simplon; it is ever in the mouths of all who have seen it. It has been said of him that he was a man with more of the spirit of ancient times than any other modern: this part of his system is antique; the admiration of it is worthy of an antique people: it is not in the time of intellectual developement throughout all the parts of society that this should excite such unqualified praise. The Abbé de Pradt in one of his works (I think that on the Congress) has some remarks on this question. The means by which these works were effected, are not in the power of other princes, and they were produced by the enormity of his despotism. At the same time it is a good application of such means; and, in the conception, something that demands spring of mind, and extent of view. We only quarrel with the *extravagance* of the praise. Princes do not think enough of what they might do in this way.

Friday, 11*th*. — First day of my stay at Milan, put up at the Pension Suisse. Bought to-day the Guide to Milan, six francs, and Roscoe's Speech, in English, on the opening of the Liverpool Institution, two francs. Glad to observe signs of a reference to England, more than to Paris, in English prints and English works. The similarity of the streets in Milan makes it very difficult for a stranger to find his way about the town.

Saturday, 12*th*. — Commenced to day with my laquais de place. Went first to deliver my letter to the Abbate Gironi, found the Bibliotheque Reale larger than I expected; afterwards went to the Amphitheatre built by Eugene Beauharnois.— It certainly greatly surpassed my expectations. It struck me as coming nearer the magnificent works of the Roman emperors than any thing I had yet seen. Such things rising in a town, which, as a matter of national distinction, renders its language worthy of such achievements, must give a great value in the popular estimation to the government effecting them. At all events those who do not give liberty, ought to give

something like this. If not, what is its claim? At this time of day, what hold does it take of the popular feeling? and if it does not address the popular feeling in some way, after the action which has been given to mind, what can be its hopes? It has been designed after the ancient amphitheatres, by the architect Canonico, and can hold 30,000 spectators. It stands in the great place d'armes, where 40,000 men may manœuvre; and is nobly simple in its design. The seats are like stone steps round the immense oval. At one end are the stables, &c. for the horses, &c. to come out into the vast arena; at the other end the gate for the entrance of the people: in the middle a hall has been built, called the Salle des Rois, and in front of it sat the viceroy. A considerable stream of water runs within the enclosure, and this could be employed so as to fill the whole space of the arena, and afford the spectators the pleasure of a naumachia, and other aquatic exhibitions. A grand fête was given on occasion of the baptism of the king of Rome, of which a print is shown, and another when the present German viceroy

entered. The last must have seemed to the people rather a satire on the donor, than an honour.

As usual, here was shown much admiration of the government to whom they owed this work. "But all this was done by the money which he seized," I said; — "Yes; he took much; but he made us gain much," was the reply. Near it is the unfinished magnificent arch of triumph, forming the gate of the Simplon. It is certainly the finest thing promised to Milan, and almost justifies Bossi's assertion, that "if finished, it would have presented the grandest architectural work of any class, that has ever been imagined, either by the ancients or the moderns, and would have honored not only the artist by whom it was designed, but the city, the nation, and the age." Here, however, it rests, having attained only one-third of its elevation; and "the Germans will never finish it," say the Italians, with a sigh. It is not, indeed, easy to see how they can: the materials are all prepared; the exquisite capitals for the pillars, and other ornaments, are cut, and ready to be placed; the bas-reliefs

for the frieze finished; the larger bas-reliefs for the * * * also: but the subjects of all these; — for the frieze, there is the entry of Napoleon into the town of Milan, after his triumph over the Austrians; and, in another part, the surrender of Ulm by General Mack. In the procession on entering the town, the governor gives the keys to Napoleon, and he is followed by his favorite Mameluke. The artists have always been glad to avail themselves of Rustan, as affording them the means of introducing picturesque costume. The sculpture work is deserving of much praise, particularly the ornaments, which are cut with an exquisite delicacy and precision, that gives the marble the appearance of the most plastic material. The bas-reliefs are wrought in the marble of Carrara; the general building of the arch is of a hard marble from the Lago Maggiore. The part finished presents a very beautiful object. It is complete all around up to its elevation: there are four large bas-reliefs on each front, below the pillars. Those on entering are, Italy, by Monti di Ravenna, as a beautiful female, with the emblems of abundance, and the instruments of the fine

arts; — France, by Pizzi, as a female also, in an attitude of command, resting on a shield, in the centre of which is the head of Jupiter, and with the cock at her feet; — History, an exquisite female figure by Acquisti; — and Renown, another by the same artist. On the other side, there are Hercules, with Buonaparte's head, by Monti di Milano; — Mars, by Pacetti; — Minerva, by the same; — and Apollo, who has just killed the Pythian serpent, by Pizzi. Without entering into particular criticism, the execution of the whole may be described as reflecting the highest honour on the Italian artists; and the view of this superb monument, in its present unfinished state, cannot but excite regret and disappointment, in minds the least inclined to admire the author of such works. Certainly, however, by erecting them, he has proved that he well knew his trade; and the legacy of them terribly embarrasses those who have taken his place. Left in their present state, they are a daily provocative to discontent and reproach; — finished, they would suggest their disgrace and defeats, and prompt taunts and pleasantries. How to counsel

in such a predicament is not easy; but no Englishman can see them, without wishing that this title to admiration was added to the others that his country possesses. The greatest efforts are made by her spirits; let some attention be paid by authorities. Without this, England has placed herself at the head of many branches of art, but in the average of production she is behind. The great art of a statesman is to see how, in the revolution of time, and the change of circumstances, new pursuits should be favored, and new systems of government be adopted, and a new application of means be made. Hitherto, intellect and liberty have been discussed, but the time seems arrived, when sedulous attention should be given to the arts. The world has arrived to an advanced state: they are now much thought of. We have the means of superiority in our power. The Elgin collection — the rich collections of individuals — the excellence of some of our artists, and their noble spirit of enterprize, are well known. The connection of the arts with our industry and wealth, is evident: we are behind in design, or at least are but just taking our

place. The designs of paper, of furniture, of stuffs for ladies' dresses, are more classical on the continent than with us.

In the convent, close to the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, is the famous fresco of the last supper, by Leonardo da Vinci, of which the fine engraving is now so well known. It is on the wall of the refectory, dreadfully injured by the French troops, when they first arrived in Italy during the revolutionary times. The viceroy, Eugene, has done his best to make up the injury, by putting to rights the place, &c. and an inscription over the door states this; but as the mischief was done by the French the inscription in honour seems unsuitable. The marks of the balls fired by the soldiers at the figures are yet to be seen. Appiani, it is said, attempted to retouch the heads, when an order was given to preserve this celebrated work from further injury; but he could not, by reason of a nitre coming out from the wall; and we are not sorry for it. What remains is at least Leonardo's. Having heard so much of the injury it had sustained, I was agreeably surprised to find the expression of the heads still almost

completely discernible. Giuseppe Bossi has written a learned volume, (says the Guide to Milan, vol. i. p. 180.), collecting the most exact and precious notices respecting this inimitable and unequalled work. The convent has cloisters, which are very fine, and ornamented by frescos tolerably well preserved, the work of Bernardo Zenale, the confidential friend of Leonardo. They are fine specimens. These cloisters are now, however, a stable-yard for the horses of the gensdarmes. The improvement here introduced by the French, resolves itself into a question between monks and gens-d'armes, which is about the general question between the system of Bonaparte, and that which he broke down. In the church there was formerly "the wonderful crown of thorns, by Titian;" "but," says an Italian, "it was knavishly taken from us; and it has *not been returned.*"

In my walk to-day, I heard often "such a thing has been so — *depuis que les Allemands sont venus.*" These words were uttered with a strong expression of disgust and hatred; and it is impossible not to participate in an Italian's feeling in this re-

spect. The Austrian government is mild and paternal at home, and the Germans are an estimable people; but here they know and feel themselves opposed to the public opinion; they are strangers in the place, and at the same time masters, which is terrible. The consciousness of being hated, gives gloom and severity to their character and conduct. It was said to me, that, since the Austrians have been here, the courts of justice are not open to the public when causes are tried; people are taken to prison, tried, and put to death, and nothing known. It is not pretended to be denied, that these are really malefactors; but as the practice of the French was more liberal, the alteration is much to be condemned. The punishment of death has been changed from guillotining to hanging.

I observed La Casa di Litta, the house of the Duke of Litta; the exterior is beautiful.

Sunday, 13th.—Heard in the streets men going along singing in parts; also other very fine singing. Commenced to-day my lessons in Italian with the signor. I find him violently against the change that brought the Aus-

trians into Italy. He was professor in one of the lyceums established by the French government, where the scholars paid a certain sum, and the government added what was necessary for the masters. These institutions, he says, have all gone to wreck: the loss of his place may a little taint his opinions. The Germans, he says, have prohibited all the good manufactures of France and England, and will let us consume nothing but their own wretched cloths, &c. More Germans are employed now, he says, than there were French in the time of Napoleon. The president of the tribunal of commerce is a German. Indeed we have not gained by the change, he said with a sigh. The head professor in the college of medicine at Pavia, is a German just brought in amongst them, who knows perfectly the Latin, he said, but who is otherwise a great fool. The Germans wish generally, he added, to make us adopt their systems, their manners, and even their language. There is probably a good deal of exaggeration in all this; but at all events, the Germans have no right to be here. I have the greatest respect for them as a

people; esteem them more than any other; but they have no business in Italy. They and the Italians are too dissimilar. Went to the cathedral, and heard a priest preaching. This was the first time I witnessed declamation in the Italian language. The sound of his voice was sonorously harmonious: there was great variety in his intonation. He was more violent in his markings of the variety in the sense, than would be thought decorous in England. His exclamations were often familiar, sometimes they approached to the comic; and were then succeeded by a torrent of serious and energetic declamation. His action was animated and graceful; his whole manner very easy and commanding: the congregation was numerous, and in general very attentive. His discourse was made up of the common-place maxims of his religion. Every thing betokens this to be a more religious country than France; numbers of genteel people were attending the sermon. Bucks even kneeling down, crossing themselves, and repeating their prayers half audibly. Among the congregation were to be seen many fine Italian female heads, intent, the

moment you looked at them, to adjust their graceful veil, and to put a particular expression into their large black eyes. A priest in an enclosure near an altar, was occupied in placing as many lighted candles in a large chandelier, as the people gave him sous. The candles differed in size, according to the price. It was generally the poor who gave; and for two sous of Milan, one had but a very small taper. The money was put into a box, how appropriated I do not know, and the lighted taper was considered by the worshipper as a duty performed. The priest had a sharp eye to all offerers. After the service he offered to show me the cathedral. Certainly one cannot see this without thinking that it ought to be exploded at this time of day; but in the very place where this thought occurred, in consequence of what was there happening, was there not much to abate its severity? Look at these fine sculptures; this mass of workmanship so vast, while the triumphal arch of Napoleon, where there is not a thousandth part of the quantity, is thought so great an exploit. Look at all this exercise of zeal, industry, and ingenuity

— this immense expenditure — this dauntless determination. What could have effected it, but the feeling of that devotion which is now so ridiculed? It would seem that so efficacious a principle of enthusiasm has not been substituted. What government would now-a-days undertake to build a cathedral after such a plan, with all its borderings of carved-work, its cut figures, its notches, friezes, stone-work? It seems to surpass all modern endeavour: the motive was more powerful than any that now exists. Our roads, palaces, and churches, what are they compared with a cathedral?

Spent to-day nine sols for a watch-key, and ten sous to police for permission to stop at Milan.

At the table d'hôte to-day, in a conversation between some Swiss and French, the former said, that without them the French would often have been badly off in Napoleon's affairs. This convinced me, that if the allied governments had known how to take advantage of circumstances, there were excellent materials for alienating the nations from the feeling for Buonaparte, by exciting their national self-love. But Buo-

naparte understood much better than they how to appeal to people: he could kindle the sentiments that suited his ambition in their breasts, whereas, with a much better cause, the allies have raised no sentiment whatever in their favour. The Swiss at dinner particularly appealed to the Russian campaign. The Swiss and the Bavarians said they came out of Russia in possession of their arms; the French had thrown away theirs; and all the resistance that was made in the end, and all the appearance of discipline that was preserved, were to be found among their auxiliaries. At this table d'hôte, however, as elsewhere, the universal sentiment is that of dissatisfaction at the change. Men express themselves with great caution. At Milan, in particular, is observed the greatest care not to commit one's-self, but dissatisfaction everywhere prevails. The decline of commerce is universally spoken of; and certainly this alone would prove Buonaparte's genius, that with a system so fierce, so unbending, so unsparing, he knew how to combine its severity with so many advantages to the interests of the people, that regret is sunken irremoveably in their

minds. What is miserably wanting to the present governments of the world, is the art of employing resources of people and profiting by all circumstances.

Monday, 14*th*. — Took my second lesson with my master. Afterwards went with my laquais de place to les Colonnes de St. Laurent, or Temple d'Hercule — l'Arc de Marengo — l'Eglise de St. Marie, près St. Celso — Eglise de St. Paolo, admired for its façade — la Course de la Porte Romaine — the Hospital — la Fontaine — L'archévêché. Paid at Hospital 30 sols; Archévêché 30 sols; St. Marie près St. Celso, 16 sols; bought paper 6 sols: in all 4fr. 2s. I shall postpone my remarks on these objects until to-morrow.

Tuesday, 15*th*. — Took my third lesson with my master; afterwards went with the laquais de place to the church of St. Marco; l'Oppedale di Frati; la Casa di Corregione; la Promenade; le Jardin Public; le Lazaretto; la Villa Buonaparte; a second time to the Archévêché to see the paintings; la Statue de St. Carlo Borromeo. Paid, House of Correction, 1fr. 11s. Bought

some bread, given to prisoners, eight sols. Villa Buonaparte, 3frs. Archévêshé, 1fr. In all 5 frs. 19 sols.

I shall notice in their order the objects seen on this and the preceding day. The columns of Hercules are the most ancient monument of Milan; they solely remain of the several circi, theatres, and palaces, and baths, mentioned by Ausonius in his celebrated epigram. They are sixteen in number, of the Corinthian order, and stand in the Corso di Porta Ticinese; a very grand and imposing object. They are supposed to belong to the baths of Hercules; and, by their grandeur, as applied to such an object, give a striking idea of how the wonders of architecture were lavished by the ancients.

The Arch of Marengo has had its name changed by the Austrians, who have finished this monument, begun by Napoleon, to the Porta Ticinese. The inscription, "Pax Populi," is very different from Buonaparte's; but there are many men here not satisfied that the true peace of the people has been really consulted. It is beautiful and simple; in-

finitely finer, as an object, than the arch in the Place Carousel. It is built of granite brought from the Lago Maggiore.

The church of Sainte Marie près St. Celso, gives the best idea of any in Milan, of the riches of these Catholic temples in their more supreme days. It is well worth seeing for the roof, done in 1795, by Appiani, a Milanese artist of great merit, whose last work is in the Villa Buonaparte. The principal altar is wonderfully rich, being almost entirely formed of marble inlaid in bronze, producing a surprisingly rich effect. The head of a cherubim, in mosaic, behind, is a prodigy of beauty. * Four pillars of solid silver adorn this altar. Joseph II. enriched it with a present of sixteen immense silver candlesticks, and other splendid gifts, in return for an original picture by Raphael, which he took to Vienna. Bramarte is believed to have been

* Fontana has a fine statue of the Virgin, in the base of which there is a figure of Piety in gold; a bas-relief in silver is also in honour of the Virgin: two angels in marble, by Procaccini, sustain the crown of gold over the head of the Virgin, which is also enriched with diamonds.

the architect. On the outside are two fine statues of Adam and Eve, by Lorenzi, a celebrated sculptor of Florence. The capitals of the arches within are all of bronze; gilding and painting shine from the roof: and the pillars; the pavement is all of marble of divers colours, beautifully inlaid in foliage and arabesque work, exquisitely designed. There are some very fine pictures and frescos in this church, by Giulio Cesare Procaccini, Ercole Procaccini, and Paris Bordone, a scholar of Titian's. The fall of Saul from his horse, is a most esteemed work of Moretto di Brescia. The riches of this church seemed to have gained it repute with the worshippers, of whom there were always more here than elsewhere. When on their knees, a stranger is fearful of disturbing them; yet a gentleman kneeling and saying his prayers, spoke to me, to point out to my attention a picture; and at the moment when the priest was performing the mass at the altar, the most solemn of all services, as understood by the Catholics, I was introduced to admire the mosaic. How has this church preserved its riches from the French?

The church of Saint Paul is chiefly famous for the sculpture on the exterior in bas-relief.

The course of the Porta Romana is fine. The great hospital is not remarkable for its architecture; its length is enormous. It can accommodate 2000 patients. It had only 860 when I saw it. The wards are long and clean, but cold; stone floors; no fire in January; no nurses that I saw in the men's wards; but all very clean. There is ample allowance to patients, according to doctor's orders. The hospital is richly endowed; it is said that the French wished to possess themselves of part of the revenue. In the chapel over the altar there is a picture by Raphael, for which it is said that 180,000 francs (about 7,000*l.*) have been offered.

At the archbishop's, who is now a German, appointed to replace Caprara, lately dead at Paris, are seen some fine pictures; I particularly admired a boy's head by Titian, containing all the noble simplicity of youth, and a head in crayon, said to be undoubtedly by Raphael; Titian is really sublime by the energy, and breadth, and

reality of his manner. A very curious ancient mezzo-relievo is to be seen on a tomb in the church of St. Marco. Here are also votive pictures and legs, &c., such as the Greeks put in their temples for deliverances; a man tumbling out of a window — a carriage whose horses run away, and no person hurt; such are the miracles wrought in favour of individuals, to commemorate which they have in gratitude hung up these representations of the events. I have seen the same sort of things in various churches.

The hospital of monks, lo Spedale dei Frati, is worthy of admiration for its cleanness, comfort, and the attentions given by these good religieux; all the beds have curtains.

The House of Correction is for men and women, sentenced to certain periods of imprisonment. All are obliged to work according to their trades. The prisoners have two hours of recreation each day, and do not work on Sundays or on festivals; they are allowed thirty ounces of bread, made of Turkey grain, and a small measure of soup a day. The friends may give what they please. The men are separate from

the women. There are cells below for the refractory; and I also saw a machine to which they are tied when they are beaten with staves; this is of German origin. Here is an infirmary for men and another for women; the place is clean. I walked amongst the prisoners, they were all orderly; almost all the offices of the prison are exercised by prisoners.

La Villa Buonaparte — magnifico Palazzo, fabricato del Conte di Belgiojoso, in 1790, says the Guide to Milan. The interior and exterior, it adds, announces the grandeur of the mind of him who caused it to be erected. All strangers go to see it, from the interest attached to the remains of this dynasty. Since the Austrians came it has been called Villa Augusta. Here Eugene resided, except in the dead of winter, when he lived at the Palais Royal in the town. It is close to the promenade and the public garden, near the east gate. There is nothing extraordinary in its situation; and its pictures and most elegant furniture, being the private property of Eugene, have been removed. One may yet admire the beautifully simple elegance

of the silk hangings, which the Princess had executed, under her immediate orders and directions, by Milanese artists. She first thought of Lyons; but, on reflection, wishing to encourage the town, she had the work executed in Milan. She was very much beloved; Eugene, said my guide, was not so much so during the last few years; he gave too much the preference to French. He added that the tyranny and oppression of the French was dreadfully felt, but that they are preferred to Austrians. In the dining-room there is a fine roof-piece by Appiani, representing Parnassus; it was his last work before his death; it is indeed wonderful that he should have done it in a fortnight. He received 40,000 francs from Eugene, who inherited from his mother a taste for pictures, and for all objects of art and taste. He had a rage for them, said my conductor. His mother was often here, and caused a small observatory to be built at top of the house, whence she might view the country. My guide spoke of the familiarity of Eugene, and of his wish that every one should see the fine things. He made a striking contrast between him and the present viceroy,

who takes no notice of any thing; seldom comes near the place; never lives in it, and is as stupid and silent as possible. In the great hall there were pictures of all the family by Girard; at present a solitary bust of the emperor of Austria has but a poor effect, and my conductor increased it by his mode of pointing it out.

The course of the eastern gate is extremely fine.

The carnivals, like every thing else, I am told, are not now so brilliant as during the time of Beauharnois; then there was a court; now there is absolutely nothing; then, to make a show in the eyes of the court, the nobles united their families to make a masquerade, or other pageantry in the streets; but now there is nothing of all this. Their luxury was then very great; they had new equipages every three or four months; there were competition, rivalry, pride; now there is nothing. The Germans are economical, said an Italian to me: the viceroy makes no show, and our great families follow his example. Great complaints of this are uttered every where. In general, good society made much more expenditure in

the time of the French than at present; and this is particularly necessary for Milan, where the shopkeepers are so many in comparison with the wants of the place. The present viceroy is a bachelor; Beauharnois was married; he held a levee once a week; this caused the great families to incur great expence. "We have nobles here," said my landlord, "who do not know the extent of their wealth;" but, of late years, something like a change has shown itself, the rich merchants have purchased land from some of the nobles, who were obliged to sell that they might maintain show at court.

My Italian master told me that, throughout all Italy, people of good society (bon ton) are totally without religion, particularly at Rome. This is the necessary consequence of the Catholic religion, which the author of the work on the Social Institutions of the present day would have every where exchanged for Protestantism.

He also observed that great attention was paid here to all productions of England, and to all her measures; this corresponds with what I observe in print-

shops and among booksellers; what a fine occasion to have taken noble advantage of! But the impression is not that of satisfaction with our conduct; we have rather disappointed hopes, and our travellers have not raised the reputation of our country.

The Italian character seems to have an *extent*, which the French does not possess — A greater *roundness* or breadth in the demeanour of these people —I see nothing here of the external manner of a Frenchman.

Wednesday, 16*th*. —My Italian master told me of the terrible war that had existed for some time in Italy, between the romantics and the classics, and mentioned to me certain authors and periodical works engaged in the dispute. He said there was much "acharnement" in the affair.

I afterwards went to the church of San Nazaro, built in the form of a Greek cross. Visited the tombs of the family of the Trivulzi, and then went to St. Alessandro, the altar of which is the richest in Milan. Proceeded to the church of St. Ambrosio, where stands the ancient pulpit in which he preached. There are four columns of porphyry at the altar; and, above the choir, a

wonderfully rich mosaic. Thence to the church of St. Victor, of which the whole roof and walls are gilt and painted in a very rich manner.

"For three or four years past," said my Italian master, "they have made a terrible noise in Italy with their quarrels between the romantics and the classics. Your poet, Lord Byron, who has written pieces in fragments to give them an air of antiquity, has been translated by Leoni and others, and read with avidity. Shakspeare has been translated, and at all the horrors, and gloomy passages and murders, the people applaud rapturously. Petzi, the editor of the Journal of Milan, wrote a good paper on this subject, in which he gave it as his opinion, that a people should not be accustomed to contemplate such barbarities; it tended to render them barbarous. In our periodical works you may trace the dispute, in the criticisms on the works published."

After the lesson, I took a short walk alone to the eastern gate, and returned to dinner. Among the commercial travellers at the table d'hôte, there were evident signs of great hatred to the English. I cannot

forget the singular effect produced on my mind, by hearing these men talk of Rimini, Piacenza, Bologna, and Rome, with reference to cotton threads and silk stuffs, as one may hear travellers in England talk of Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, and Coventry. So different in my mind were the ideas, associated with those renowned Italian names.

Friday; 18th. — My Italian master spoke of Rasori, a physician, a man of great eminence and much esteemed. He is the author of a new system of medicine. About three years ago, when there was said to be a plot against the Austrian government, (which the Liberals say was more the work of the government than of conspirators,) he was implicated, with several other respectable men. He was imprisoned eighteen months without trial, and then doomed to farther confinement for a certain term. His house is full of men of science and letters, who come to show their respect for him; but he is under a sort of surveillance, so that he cannot leave the town without permission. Monti was also suspected to be concerned in this affair, but nothing was proved

against him. However, he is regarded with ill-will by the government, so that permission was refused him to commence a periodical work, and he has been obliged to leave the Biblioteca Italiana, in which he was originally a *collaborateur*; Acerbi the editor being a devoted government man. From all these facts, it is clear that the present system of things is opposed to the *mind* of the period. It must seek to gain it, and reconcile itself by some means or other, otherwise things cannot remain as they are. One or other must gain a victory, and it is to be hoped that mind will not be defeated; but one or other must concede; for it cannot continue, that there shall be an essential opposition between the institutions and the spirit of an age. The institutions of each period hitherto have been conformable to the spirit of the period in general, with certain exceptions, before great changes. This alone can be the permanent state. The hatred of the Austrians here, leads to an undue distaste for German literature, which the government seems to wish to introduce. They want to make us Germans, say the Italians. But it will be found difficult to

make an Italian a German, and impossible to make a German an Italian. Keep them distinct then.

I paid Marco, my laquai de place, 18f. 10c. in all for his services, and discontinued him from to-day: paid also to the coffee-house 5f. 8c. for six days' breakfast of coffee, and gave 7 sols to the waiter; in all, 5f. 15c.

I went to-day to see the Albergo, ó Luogo pio Trivulzi, a charitable asylum founded by a nobleman, for persons of both sexes, who are more than seventy years of age. — Here, in 1799, died Maria Gaetana Agnesi, who shone in the mathematics. The house at present contains 550 poor people of both sexes, the numbers of males and females being nearly equal. They are allowed for dinner two ounces of meat, as much soup and bread as they like, and about a pint of wine. On meagre days something is given in lieu of meat. For breakfast they have broth and bread, and the same for supper, with wine. They appeared very clean, and the establishment was kept in excellent order.

We had to-day at dinner, two French officers, well-dressed, genteel, fine-looking

men. They had been travelling a good deal for pleasure, and told us they had been in London, "pour dépenser notre argent." It was whispered that they were going to America. They were warmly welcomed by the French commercial travellers who dine here every day, and the conversation took a decided Buonapartean turn: they hesitated, however, to pronounce the name of Napoleon, even when it was absolutely necessary in conversation; as when, in mentioning the death of the Grand Duke of Baden, they alluded to the exemplary conduct of his wife, the youngest sister of Buonaparte, who attended his death-bed with exemplary tenderness, though he died in the most offensive state, through the effects of libertinism. They had but just arrived in Milan, and complained dreadfully of having been examined like criminals, and detained two hours and a half at the police, before their passports were signed for Genoa, and it was put on their passports, that they should positively set out the next day. On saying, at the police office, that their forms were very severe, the officers of the police replied, "Messieurs, rea-

sons which I cannot explain to you, render it necessary." They had both served through the Spanish war, and one had been made prisoner in Russia. They were fine specimens of the French military of this school. They described the people of Spain as embittered against them from first to last: and the one who had been prisoner there, said the populace threw stones in upon them, and six of his companions were taken out and *crucified*:—this must be a lie. They described the people of the low countries as regretting very much their junction with France, though one that had passed through the country in 1811, said, they then cried very much against France. They described this country as unfairly dealt with, in regard to English goods, with which it is inundated. One of our commercial travellers spoke of the Italians as pretty much in the same predicament — their commerce utterly ruined, and their minds filled with regret for the past; though they were not contented with that past when it was present. A Genevois paid particular compliments to the French military, and on all occasions this man has shown himself a bitter enemy to the change.

They alluded to the undue favour now shown in promotions, the misery of many of the officers who had devotedly served France, and inveighed against the employment of the Swiss. This called forth a man of Basle, who spoke French fluently, but badly, in his German accent. He said, that the Swiss had served France well during the last 20 years, and ought not to be now cast off. This was denied by the officers, who said, that few comparatively were retained of those who had served France during the last twenty years. — Young men were promoted over the heads of old soldiers. *

This conversation was curious, as a good proof how completely man, in general, is blind to every thing but his own interests, and how often the force of character, and the vigour of conduct, that which passes well in the world, and gives a manly decided appearance, is found to be nothing but feeling only, and a disposition to sustain con-

* The Germans, including those of Basle, hate the French. At the Pension Suisse-Allemande, the waiters are ordered not to speak French, nor to bring the two nations together.

sistently the side of things favourable to yourself. Above all, it proved how little the present opposition sentiment of Europe, that which is so dwelt upon in our liberal journals, is to be traced to liberal sentiments. In alluding to the present state of Italy, not a word was said of Italian independence, not a sign in the room in favour of the recollections of Italian glory. The decrease in the demand for cotton thread with some, and half pay instead of whole pay with others, such are their matters of highest pitch and moment; and to obviate this dissatisfaction a change must be made, which would neither appease our opposition journals, nor advance the fine principles for which they profess to be so anxious. Let the Belgian government make an alteration in its regulations as to our merchandize, more agreeable to the wishes of its people, and the Morning Chronicle would say, This is continental gratitude! This comes of the Prince of Orange's Russian connection! Russian jealousy, and underhand manœuvre! On the other hand to content the officers, what would be necessary may be gathered from their conversation, which

certainly is not favourable to the views of the philanthropist.

Thursday, 17*th*.—Took my eighth lesson in Italian. "Universally," said the Signor, "the men of talent are enemies to the political change." They knew the tyrannical disposition of Buonaparte; but he had the art of gaining their affections. He talked to them smartly and fluently on the subjects of their studies. Whether or not his preparation was superficial, and calculated only for the public effect of his audiences, it was admirably managed, and he would talk for a couple of hours with great fluency on metaphysics, politics, or whatever might happen to be the theme. He had a briskness and life of manner that pleased very much, then he was in the habit of saying smart things to the préfets and public functionaries, to put them out, and render them confused, and this pleased mightily. "I heard him indulge this sort of freak myself," said my master, "against the poor préfet of ——— Chi siete? Sire, sono il prefetto di ———. (which is the name of the town and not of the district,) e non della ——— (which is the department to which

always the préfet belongs.) Every body laughed very much, but this is only one instance of thousands that occurred. The German prince, on the contrary, says nothing, but bows to all. They say he is a good Latin scholar, but we see no proofs of his talents or scholarship. They make dreadful stinging pleasantries against the Austrian government, which are read with avidity in the private circles. In short, all of mind is enlisted against the present people. The reason is clear; first, before every thing else, it is necessary to live. Buonaparte made us live, and well; under the Austrians we starve. The institute is fallen to nothing; it exists in name, but that is all. Men of talent, such as Monti, and Brocchi, had good literary places under the French; now they have nothing, and must work like slaves for the magazines. Monti writes for magazines: they pay him 40 francs per sheet. Can such men be contented?"

I asked if he could explain the cause of that general stagnation, of which every body complained? "No otherwise," he said, "but by the want of that vigorous move-

ment, that brisk circulation of all the means of the country, which the energy of Buonaparte excited. If he saw a lady of rank at court not elegantly dressed, he would tell her of it, and even abuse her for her parsimony; he would have every body active, and everything pushed to its utmost; arches must be built, men of talent must work, and all in the same style. Thus the pride of each one was goaded, and the interest of each one concerned to do as much as possible. It is now quite the reverse. The viceroy hangs his head among us, or at best nods it, and the movement of all else is drowsy. * "What mattered it to us that he was a tyrant? he gave us a name, he gave us bustle, business, and livelihood. Now we have nothing." These were his words. Several observations on this statement may be made. 1st, The motives of the men of intellect in their present oppressed state,

* The following is a copy of a pasquinade attached to the neck of the man of stone at Milan: —

Credeva d'esser solo;
In vece siamo trè;
Io; l'arcivescovo
Ed il vicerè.

though natural, are not of the most exalted kind. Real love of liberty enters not amongst them, though perhaps affection for national name does. 2dly, At same time, we thus see that the system of Buonaparte promoted a species of national prosperity to a very high degree, a thing so different from the assurances of some English journals. Such articles on the result of the holy alliance, as I have read this evening, copied in the journal of Frankfort, from the ———, are not quite à propos. The editor in his zeal contrasts the present peace and prosperity of nations with the days of disorder, misery, and darkness that are passed. 3dly, Perhaps the most striking of all the proofs given by Buonaparte, of genius, is this art of gaining superior minds. His system was one of tyranny, but, after making every thing cede to it, he then honoured all that was honourable. He must have great talent to make himself respected, admired, and even liked, in all circles, among professors, poets, soldiers, and all. 4thly, We thus see to what the present rulers of nations should direct their attention. The time is past, when every thing could be

done by magnificent proclamations. The *word* is no longer master of the *thought*, says a French author. People are not now to be taken in by appeals to the grandeur of families and persons, that have nothing grand about them. The princes must condescend to the *world*, for the world is now wise enough to examine them as *men*. Buonaparte had the advantage of mingling with men, and of acquainting himself with business, before his elevation; and this is an advantage of incalculable value.

In my walk to-day, I observed noble fat hogs brought in to be killed: how different from the long-legged dog-looking swine of France! I had before seen in the streets of Milan, bullocks that would be thought fine in England. Every thing of this sort seems on a better footing here than in France; they understand it better. The fine houses also are much more like those of England, than those of Paris; clean outsides; families living nobly to themselves; living as if they paid respect to the intrinsicness of splendour: whereas, in France, nothing but the appearance in the saloon is

thought of. Family mansions in Milan are more princely than those in France.

Saturday, 19*th*. — The Signor observed, that "the Germans are *d'une bonne pâte;* but what is that to us? The Italians are *fins*, *rusés*, up to all sorts of rogueries and rascalities. The heavy-headed Germans cannot govern them: the most whimsical impositions are daily practised upon them by the knaves, to the injury of justice. The French knew better how to manage us. Thefts and other crimes, that were very common before they came, were soon repressed by them. The French paid the gendarmes very highly; their gendarmerie was an excellently constituted body: now, all is comparatively unattended to. In the small principalities of Italy, the princes are not able to pay the gendarmes well; they have changed the name, and put men as agents of the police, who do nothing but eat and drink when they can; they are miserably paid, and perform their duty as miserably. The thieves come and drink with them in the cabarets. In the kingdom of Turin, also, the system is very bad, through want of energy and activity in the government."

These observations correspond with what I experienced. I gave twenty sols, and my things were never visited. The conversation at dinner at the tabled'hôte, the day before yesterday, turned almost entirely on the frequency of stoppages on the highway in Italy; most of the persons present, being commercial travellers, had been, at one time or another, stopped and robbed. Between Rome and Naples, they said, it is necessary to proceed as rapidly as possible; to make no stay at the interjacent places; to avoid all parade; and to give no intimation of an intention to set out.

Sunday, 20th.—After my eighth lesson in Italian, I went to the church of Ste. Fidèle, which is of a beautifully simple construction; and afterwards to that of Santa Maria della Passione, rich in pictures. Here I saw a number of young females, all dressed in black, whom a rich lady of Milan, named Arresi, has rescued from the entrance on evil paths, and whom she supports comfortably, that they may either become *religieuses*, or be married, if eligible opportunities offer. In the latter case, the patroness gives a dowry. The ladies of the

town also assist her in general charity, as she is well known for her compassionate disposition. I also saw young orphan girls under the same patronage; and was told that a number of rich females in Milan distribute large sums in charity. The lady Arresi has a fortune of above 20,000*l.* a-year, which is considered very great. I then went to the church of Santa Maria del Carmine, famous for its good music. I here observed that the poor people, who had (like my valet de place) almost lost the sense of religion in the new light of the period, were yet most careful, at particular parts of the service, to perform the prescribed signs of the cross and the genuflections: it belongs to their habits to observe with respect, as to form, the regulations of authority in religion, as well as in every thing else. The people, *comme il faut*, slightly touched their chair with their knees, in an inclining posture; but the people in rags and coarse cloth went down on theirs on the pavement. On the other hand I observed, at the Grande Chartreuse near Grenoble, that the Père général made it a rule to be a second behind his brethren in throwing himself on

his face, or on all fours. He commenced the movement a little late, and executed it more slowly, wrapping his long flannel robe about him, with an air, before going down, as if the Père général was not to be pressed too hard, even in acts of worship. There was much coquetting going on during the service; a great number of young women and young men: the church was crowded from one end to the other. Generally speaking, as I have elsewhere observed, there is a very visible difference in this respect between home and Italy, even at this its threshold, where French manners and ideas have made the most progress. The churches may be described as better attended than those in London, or, at least, quite as well. In regarding the crowd in the Carmine, and seeing whole families, fathers, mothers, and daughters; young companions coming in together, under the influence of mixed motives, but so far impressed with religious sentiments as, in the more sacred parts of the office, to follow it closely; I could not help feeling, that, by effacing all this from the internal surface of the human heart, a connecting link of

social intercourse was broken away. 'Reduce man strictly and closely, according to the principles of our philosophical economists in morals, and what is he to his fellow? — a power to act dryly and strictly according to such and such definitions. You may put in generous, cordial sentiments as you will, among the class of utilities; but this will answer for nothing but in enumeration, after their sources are dried up. The preference for country is ridiculed; religion is ridiculed; without these two, what would be....., I do not say the few men of talent, whose powers of mind are sufficient to sustain the elevation of their feelings, or the few men of most happy constitution or temperament, to whom virtue and tenderness are like the necessary functions of their organization; — but what would be the general mass? When it shall become ridiculous to rise at the sound of God save the King in a foreign land, and contemptible to go into a church, shall we have made an advance in extent of imagination and height of sentiment. The answer will be found in consulting the poets of all times, and in reflecting what a vast chasm, including the best part, would

be left in their works, if these two sources of poetic rapture had been shut to them. A *liberal* writer has ridiculed an Englishman or Irishman for rising in an assembly of foreign potentates at the sound of our admired national air. The words happened to be made for the King of Prussia: but let the words be what they may, the air is ours; it is the summons to English feeling: we have nothing to do with words, the sound is for us; we have nobody to regard but ourselves; we have not to look around us, but to act as Britons. If a Swiss peasant heard his favourite air sung in a London playhouse to some of Mr. Hooke's words, he has a right to claim it, and to act accordingly. We have seen the effect of the English rising aux Variétés at Paris, spontaneously, without concert, but unanimously, although scattered in various parts of the house — here and there a head slowly rising up, and the prettiest women in the boxes, at the sound of God save the King! Are we to be rendered dead to all this, as a means of forwarding universal suffrage? If so, let us give up universal suffrage, and consent to do with-

out it, as we have done — for the sake of still rising at God save the King.

Yet with regard to imagination: however well calculated the Catholic ceremonies may seem for stimulating this faculty, I doubt much whether the French author on the Social Institutions is right in taking it for granted that the Catholic religion is almost the sole (among Christian faiths) through which to appeal to the imagination; at least I cannot see that it appeals so much more forcibly than the others, as to warrant him in saying, that those religions (the Protestant), which do not appeal to the imagination, will never establish themselves in France. These grand forms are very striking; when the incense rises, when the host is elevated, as actually the Deity among the people, while all bow the head, and the floating sounds of solemn music roll with the clouds of smoke and perfumes, the effect is prodigious on the heart of him, who, without belief in facts, believes the reality of the source from whence such sentiments come. Let us regard such effects as indications of immortality and providence, though clouded and deranged

by the weakness of human faculties. But this impression is chiefly made on the heart of a stranger. The repetition of the same grand forms, is precisely that which surfeits and weakens imagination. The omission of them, if it does not starve it entirely, excites its appetite, and sets it in exercise. There is an invisibility about the tenets of the Methodists and the Scotch church, which still more forcibly strikes the imagination of the votaries than the organ and the surplice. Is a Methodist without imagination? Take the Scotch woman in Waverly, and see how her imagination wraps every thing with the noble mantle of religion. A Catholic old woman, telling her beads, has not half the poetry of religion in her soul. Take all the characters of the same class in these novels, and contrast them with any which fiction has exhibited as acting on the tenets of the Romish church. Surely the little effect of the Catholic religion on conduct, is a proof that it takes no deep hold on the imagination.

Monday, 21*st*. — Paid my bill at the hotel for dinners and bed since my arrival,

viz. ten dinners and eleven beds, with fire each day, - - in all 50 fs. 5 sols.

Waiter 15 sols a day, up to Monday, - -	7	10
	57	15
Add to this 10 sols a day for coffee in afternoon,	5	0
	62	15

By a general calculation made to-day, I find I have spent in ten days at Milan, including laquais de place, *and all but master*, 135 francs, being 13 francs 8 sols a day.

Monday, 21*st*. — The Signor dined with me. He regretted that he found the English mistrustful in regard to expences. I endeavoured to explain to him how it was: I observed that the expansion of knowledge, and the activity of opinion, had sent every body abroad; formerly our only tourists were a few lords; now, persons of all classes travel. Many of these people are very good in their way, but better at home than abroad. They do great harm to national character. It is fit they should be told this: perhaps there is a disposition to over-

charge a little — but a little — and when an Englishman, without knowing the language, without address, without manners, blunders and hammers about price, he reduces himself to the level of a native, yet has not the advantages of a native in such an affair. The worst of it is, also, that many play the *grand*, and yet are stingily economical. If a class, travelling only with reference to the fine arts, the sciences, the literature, &c. would say to the people, "We are not *milordi*; we are in another class — the class of savans," there would be a general disposition to receive them well, and to aid them in studying economy; for, on the continent, at present, this class is well understood, and respected; but there is another class, who, without declaring who they are — without having the tastes or the accomplishments of the other — and having all the cold pride, and imbecile, silent pretension of rich men, yet hammer, and stammer, and barter, by means of laquais de place. The people do not understand this class. Why are they here? say they. These people are very good in their own country; they

have their uses, and are well adapted to take their part in our social edifice, but very ill adapted to go abroad; they should stay at home.

The German language *must*, by the ordinances, be learned by all those who enter the law; favour depends on speaking it. The Austrians wish gradually to supplant the Italian character and language.

In Italy, said the Signor, there has been an attempt to make out Milton an atheist.

Madame de Staël's "L'Allemagne," my master told me, was not permitted to be published at Milan, until corrections and erasures had been made by the police. Buonaparte would not allow it to be printed at all. This fact seems to establish the just measure of comparison between the two systems; and shows the proportion by how much the world has gained.

Tuesday, 22d. — Read in coffee-house that Madame de Staël's work on the French Revolution was prohibited in Austria. This is singular, when coupled with what Buonaparte did against this illustrious writer. What will Schlegel say to this, if true?

Wednesday, 23d. — Went to see the Ambrosian library with the letter of introduc-

tion to the Abbate Bentivoglio, given me by the Abbate Gironi. Found the former very willing to show all the curiosities. He alluded to the passage (truly French) of Ginguené's work, where he says that Petrarch's Virgil, interesting for the notice written in his own hand, of Laura's death, to which is added, the death of some other friends, had been taken from Milan to enrich the Imperial Library, where it *would remain for ever.* It is, however, back again, with notes on the back, to show where it has been. It is this indecent boasting that turns one's heart against the French people! Their reverses would be as nothing, if not contrasted against their bragging. It has always been so; and Prince Eugene of Savoy long ago revenged it, in causing to be acted before him at the Hague, when Louis XIV. was advanced in years, the pieces to which the servility of the poets, and the vanity of the monarch, had given existence in his younger days. The Ambrosian library has also recovered back a valuable MS. of Papyrus; Josephus's History, transcribed in the fifth century. The most beautiful thing is a MS. of the fourteenth century, Pliny's Natural History,

finely illuminated with a portrait of the monk who wrote it. There were three MSS. written by Leonardo da Vinci, for which, as an inscription ordered by the donor informs us, a king of England (in 1639*) offered one thousand pieces of gold each. The three were taken by the French, and one only has been gotten back. Several fine pictures here; almost all those taken by the French have been returned; but some are missing. There are some portraits by Titian, and the cartoon of the school of Athens by Raphael, which deserve most to rivet the attention; the latter is rather obscure, and spoiled.

In conversation to-day, a French lady, who, with her husband, dines regularly at the table d'hôte, mentioned in terms of disapprobation the very great difference between the footing of the clergy here and in France. You see them, said she, in the parterre of the theatres; they pay their court to the ladies; you see them accompanying pretty women to the promenade. In her disapprobation of this I could not agree.

* Charles I.

The clergy are not fallen so into contempt here as in France: they enter into society: a priest in fashionable society in Paris would be a butt; a miserably hunted object; their wretched costumes assist this feeling; but their order is irrecoverably gone in France. It was once enabled, by means of the abbés, to take a distinguished part in society, and not in a manner very creditable to itself. They were convenient sort of creatures: their sacred calling, in some measure, served as a shield against scandal, an advantage not possessed by military officers, than whom they had even more leisure; and, from their education, were more able to chatter and act as guides and help-mates to the ladies in the pursuit of letters, arts, and sciences, which were then in vogue. They were idle enough to attend a lady every where, and generally well enough informed to be able to chatter erudition on all subjects. If Madame wanted to buy an old vase, they were her antiquarians; and so on. This sort of gallantry pleased them; excluded from men, they took their place with women; an abbé was a privileged and pleasing thing; women like to be

attended by some such creature; the cicisbeo in Italy is often nothing more. A pretty woman likes to have men about her while she presides; it is a graceful picture to imagine. The clergy of Milan are not on this footing; but they hold a sort of manly tone; they look up in your face: a French priest cannot do this; he seems to bear the weight of the public contempt on his back; an Italian feels no such degradation.

Thursday, 24th. — Dined with my Italian master at a restaurateur's; paid six francs for our two dinners. He alluded to the English going into these houses of refection in jackets: he said that carriages were seen stopping the way, and when people inquired what was the matter, it was replied, "Oh! the English bargaining before going into the inn." He observed, that some of the literati at Milan, on the side of the classical, maintained that the romantic sect was supported by the secret money of the Austrian government, in order to disseminate a German taste. This may serve as a proof how extravagant the assertions of party spirit

are. Equally ridiculous assertions appear in our opposition prints.

Friday, 25th. — Christmas-day. Went to the church of the Carmine and heard the fine organ.

Saturday, 26th. — Went about all the morning with Harlow.

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Thursday, 31st.—It was observed to-day by the Signor, that the Venetians, a good and mild people, hated the French with a mortal hatred. Departing from their ordinary suavity, they even assassinated them; but now, vexed, broken down, they regret the past. Thus it seems that the allies have had the art to turn the sentiment against France in her favour, which is more than she could ever effect herself.

Friday, 1st Jan. 1819. — Conversing with the Signor this day, he assured me that it was a positive fact, that a French general, on hearing the famous sonnet of Filicaja, commencing "Italia! Italia!" exclaimed, "Qu'on arrête cet homme-là, et qu'il soit fusillé en vingt-quatre heures." In a sub-

sequent conversation, he noticed the characteristics which distinguish the women of Italy from those of France. The former are less ostensibly mistresses, or it may be said masters. The French noticed this, and ridiculed the Italians as not so gallant. There is also a difference in the manner of bringing up children: the same apparent familiarity between mother and daughter is not observable in Italy which is seen in France. He remarked also, that the French wished to introduce their custom in duels, to separate when a scratch is received, but the Italian character did not brook this trifling.

Sunday, 3d. — Went to the church of Carmine: it was amazingly full. There was much appearance of coquetting among the women. In the evening, I saw the crowd coming out from the cathedral after vespers, and collecting round Punch in the square!

A conversation at the table d'hôte suggests the propriety of taking some proper notice of the charges brought against us by the French prisoners of war. "Sir, the French

will never forget your pontons," said a Frenchman to me.

Monday, 4*th*. — I went to the library of Brera, and read Londonio's pamphlet on romantic and classic poetry. In the afternoon, I stepped into the cathedral. It was the commencement of evening. I was struck by the fact of keeping this great temple open all the day, at all hours, for the reception of those who come to pray for relief, or return thanks for blessings. With us a public act of worship is performed; then all is done, and the doors are shut; but here it is more directly the house of God. Worshippers may always come, and in corners, below pillars, or in front of shrines, offer up petitions or thanks. There is something also very solemn in the idea of the actual presence of God, which is supposed by the catholics. " Ne parlez pas; le Seigneur est ici," said a priest to me. The candles burning in the midst of the blackness that surrounds the altar, indicate a mysterious presence ever resident, in whose honour the flame constantly ascends. There is something in the nature and ap-

pearance of flame that corresponds with our idea of spirit, and adds to the effect on the imagination. To walk in the dim of the twilight between the rows of these noble pillars, to see poor women and men bending their heads to the earth, and on their knees, alone, without officiating priest, and praying in a smothered voice,—the view of their figures amidst shades of night, so indistinct as to connect these worshippers with the pictures over their heads, the statues, the lights at the altar, and over the tomb of Saint Charles, — all these objects in combination, formed a scene that presented more of the union between God and his creatures, than protestantism usually does.

After my return, having gone to the window to call the waiter, I heard persons singing in parts, in some house adjacent. There are people in the streets perpetually singing in parts. It is astonishing how much more musical the country is than France or England.

Tuesday, 5th. — Read at the Bibliothèque de Brera all the forenoon. * * * *

Friday, 8th.— Again at the Bibliothèque de Brera all the forenoon. At dinner to-day at the table d'hôte, it was said that the king of Sardinia often interfered in affairs of commerce, by his own order declaring that the creditors of any particular merchant, or house, in a state of insolvency, should take no proceedings against them. His power, they said, was perfectly absolute: he could do any thing he pleased. What must be the effects on commerce of this interference, and of this power to interfere! In the Papal states, they say, the same arbitrary system prevails.

They were inveighing against the Austrians, who had rendered every thing contraband: this is the general complaint. — Venice, they said, has been ruined by the prohibition of Greek wines; at the same time, with all their Buonaparte feeling, they could not help avowing that Buonaparte was much more severe against contrabandists than the present government. He branded the offenders on the forehead. These people, whom I dine with every day, are the best examples I have ever met with of the disposition of man to find every thing

unreasonable and criminal that is contrary to his own interests. Soave says, that it is only infants and savages whom he finds to resemble each other so very much, that "si credono proprio quello che possono occupare, e qualunque usurpazione si fanno lecito purchè riesca: al contrario intolleranti sono all'estremo de' mali, o degli oltraggi, che d'altri vengan lor fatti," &c. But all this is the case with man in general. Madame de Staël says, that the Germans are an exception, and are *weak* in proportion to their *impartiality*. This is as much as to say, they have not *hard-hoofs*.

Saturday, 9th. — Read all morning at the library of Brera. Purchased some books on classic and romantic poetry.

Sunday, 10th. — Dined and had a dispute on politics with the advocate and another Italian. They were both violently against the Austrians; they said, that by a decree of the Austrian government, no more advocates are to be made up to the year 1830. They were violently hostile to England; quoted the Copenhagen expedition against us. When I mentioned Sir James Mackintosh as having spoken in behalf of Italy,

the reply was that they were obliged to the good English who took this side, but they could only consider the nation by the acts of its government.

From this time, up to Monday the 25th of January, I have omitted to keep up my journal. The following is a sketch of what has taken place.

My Italian master mentioned some interesting facts to prove, that the government makes the people what they are. He mentioned that the Venetians, from the severity of their aristocratical government, have been more fawning and servile than the others, calling every one Excellency for fear of not calling him who is Excellency by the title. When Joseph II. passed by Venice, the Doge made an immense crowd disappear in an instant.

I went to Pavia with Ravani. The scene at the theatre where the students made such a noise, was curious. I must notice the chartreuse as admirable, and shall take occasion from it to mention the chartreuse at Grenoble. I was informed at Pavia, that the number of students formerly was 2000; at present 800; that formerly the

expence was 500 francs, but notice has been given that it is to be increased to 2000, and upwards. At present, said a young student, there is too much pedantry in the professors. It would be difficult to tell the meaning of this, but it shows the general feeling. A difference is said to exist in the course of study and system of instruction; but I could not learn how; they are very vague in their assertions.

I saw at the house of Count Alari the picture of Francesca of Rimini by Bezzuoli of Florence.

* * * *

VERONA.

Saw the amphitheatre by night. Poor artisans and tradesmen at their occupations by candle light, in small cells below the vast empty arches, through which there was an indistinct view through the gloom into the scene of melancholy ruin..... the cells and prisons where human agony and brutal ferocity suffered and roared. The style of building practised by the Romans, with large masses of stone, not laid all one way as with us, but placed perpen-

dicularly and horizontally in a sort of figure, has a grand effect.

It was melancholy to walk under this ruin at night . . . a stranger . . . knowing no one in Verona . . . surrounded by these signs of human mutation. . . . All is fleeting . . . what then are we, that we should hope to remain stationary?

This was the first place in Italy where I found myself actually among the Romans. Here they were; here are their seats . . here they cried, exulted, shouted. * * *

A woman remarked to me, "furono barbari quelli Romani per fare combattere gli uomini come gli animali feri. Ah! qual mondo, in quello tempo! Dio!

VENICE.

The voluptuousness and gaiety here is of the soul — in France it is of the mouth; not deep. An Italian lounger rolls his eyes in *resolute* carelessness; looks at the ruins of the state around him, and goes to the ridotto. Surrounded by the finest remains of past magnificence, when glory was united to enjoyment, he seeks enjoyment now glory is gone; yet glory he wishes. A Frenchman is all effort and self-conscious-

ness. My lacquais de place told me, that the French in general, when he showed them the Rialto, immediately exclaimed, "Ah, we have finer bridges in Paris." This is like them in every thing. They took the Pietro Martire, and *improved* it; — and with these people we would have left the monuments of art! Here they belong to what they are. Buonaparte would have been a modern obstruction to hide the past. To be sure they were taken by the Venetians; but the time when they were taken was favourable to rendering them anew classical. This could not be the case in Paris, nor at present at all, for the age has too many newspapers to allow any thing to be classical.

Turks, Greek Armenians, women in various costume, were crossing the bridge of Sighs, which now leads to the promenade. The lyre of Lord Byron has a peculiar propriety in commencing his poem, because the bridge of Sighs is the finest spot for a prospect, where Venice really seems rising like water-columns from the sea.

The graceful action of gondoliers rowing, forms a contrast with ours. Venice seems

really maritime — stands on water — is surrounded by water — the streets are water.

Saint Mark seems to me the greatest curiosity of the world: savours of the superstition of the time, its heroism, grandeur of imagination, and imperfection of art. It is made up of consecrated robbery, yet robbery of things only valuable by force of imagination. It seems to represent a new state, ambitious and hungry of power, seizing with rapacious hand relics and monuments of art, with an avidity that indicated barbarism, and a desire that pointed to the perfection of civilization: the feeling of power, strengthened and sharpened as an appetite, by the feeling of individuality and citizenship connected with it. The rulers were all men as well as princes; and this connection with private life, gave them keenness and force in the relish of the authority which they held. They were all wilful. Hence their cruelty of punishment, the secret terror that pervaded; but the Doge could himself be seized and strangled.

In many of these particulars, one may trace an analogy with England; but in taste not sufficient as yet. I hope it will soon be

so, however. Here we find architectural magnificence, appearing not as occasional ornaments, the fruits of particular tastes but as essential elements of the people and state, the same as our roads, canals, and manufactures. Sculpture and painting are every where, of all eras.

It is impossible not to be struck by the grandeur of the Venetian school, even in its less eminent masters: a force of touch, a grandeur of colouring, a flow of composition, rushing like a stream, as it were, which is very striking. It is in Titian where women take a character peculiar to themselves: a grandeur and majesty which would seem to awe and chill the softer desires, but which he has united with the very extreme of voluptuousness. They are the glorious wives and mistresses of an exalted race of men. A superior spirit seems circulating in their veins; and the capacity of feelings the most excited, seems reposing in a consciousness of their force: nothing forced, or affected, or brought out on purpose, as in the French school. In St. Marco, is the design for the Mosaic by

Titian; of the two lions, one is meagre and fierce, the other a good fat beast.

The people have a habit of lounging in café four or five hours of an evening. *No home*: no earnest conversation: no truly knowing each other: no real, deep, strong friendships. The number of persons together, and near each other, prevents all that is earnest and heartfelt in conversation. Men touching each other: women half smiling, half speaking: saying nothing when speaking. So passes their life. A stranger is puzzled with his letters of introduction: he is no where really received, but a passing interview — a rendezvous at a café: so passes the attention paid to him.

I had a conversation with a German on English commerce. The nation, he said, was once noble, but now how changed! Surely, he said, the English character is altogether corrupted. As a German, he was impartial. He had no partiality for France; but the contrary. These are the people whom we might have gained. He spoke of the necessity of "souvenirs," all in good style, as a sound thinker; but this man was also against England by her fault.

Most deplorable signs all these of want of talent of ministry! the grandest opportunity ever given to a country, has been lost. Events to a certain point have been taken advantage of; but where are the permanent foundations laid, of public good connected with English glory? France has chiefly gained in this respect, and she owes it to her own monarch, and Russia. It is understood that English influence has generally been against liberality in France. This yet wants clearing up: such accusations are not to be taken for granted; yet it seems too likely. What we wanted was grand mind in public situation at this most critical period. Alas! they are not to be found. Let the English people then take the lesson; do for themselves the glorious work of guarding the national energies, for they must stand in their own strength, or fall. Every one on the continent hates them. Yet they must not throw themselves blindly into the arms of an opposition, that has committed the great fault alluded to by Madame de Staël. Yet such men as Mackintosh, &c. might do great things for the country, if strictly national.

* * * *

I cannot forget what M—— said of the Italian not daring at present to express his thoughts. He looks at you with his large black eyes: something betwixt grief and indifference; in fine, smiles, and then exclaims, "*Oh bella!*" in a tone of extacy, towards a singer or a dancer who makes the finest pirouette. The exclamation is uttered in a tone as if he drank to the soul all the moral and physical beauty of the universe, as one sucks the heart of an orange.

* * * *

Perhaps the chief beauty of Venice is the material of the building — all marble.

Speaking of Venice, L—— said, the Germans seem sensible that they cannot endure: hence they adopt no plans suggested to them for the permanent establishment of their power; but draw — draw — as much as possible from the country. This shows the absolute impolicy and injustice of all such foreign establishments. The

real interests of the country submitted to foreigners are the last things to be consulted.

There is no public spirit in writers, said he; for a writer cannot live by the exertion of his pen: he must seek the patronage of some family, &c. Hence Monti's dedications; Alfieri, to be sure, was rich.

* * * * *

Formerly, a noble Venetian must have eight cloaks.

Three for the masks.

One for spring-fête of ascension, when doge married the sea.

One for autumn, for the theatre and ridotto.

One for winter, for carnival. These three were called Bauta.

Two for summer, both of white taffeta.

One of blue cloth, for winter, common.

One of white cloth, for great occasions.

One of scarlet cloth, for the grand church ceremonious days of the republic.

* * * * *

Went to the Chiesa de Frati, the largest of Venice, and certainly immense. The picture of the Assumption of Notre Dame, by Titian, now in the "Musée," was here; at present there is one by Titian, the Family of Pesaro; in the chapel of the Milanois, there is a fine picture by Carpaccio, a predecessor of Titian, in the old manner. In the sacristie, the blood of Christ is preserved in a phial, which is exposed on the Sunday of the passion: it was brought from Constantinople, by Melchior Trevisan. This family still exists, but is very poor. Here is the tomb of Titian; also the tomb of Carmignola, general of the armies of the republic, who was executed for a state crime: the coffin contains his head. Novello di Carrara, of whose tyrannies terrible stories are told, and whose instruments are yet shown in the arsenal, was killed, with his children, by the Venetians, when they took Padua, and he is interred here.

Alexander III. at San Aponal, at present a house of correction for beggars. An inscription, over a gateway, records that the pope coming here *incog.* when chased by Frederick Barbarossa, the gondoliers would

not row him over to Carità (for which reason they are still reproached as having been cursed by Pope Alexander), and he slept all night on a beach, where is now a small niche chapel; with a taper. La Carità is now turned into la Scola delle Belle Arté. He lived for some time unknown; at last was discovered by a priest, who told the doge; and the discovery, and the historical events that followed, form the subjects of the pictures in the chamber of the great council, by the son of Paul Veronese, Bassano, &c.

In the hall of four-doors' is a picture of Titian, that has been at Paris; the roof is by Titian and Tintoretto; one picture by Carletto Caliari, son of Paul Veronese: he was fond of dogs, and always introduces them in his pictures.

Went to the Chiesa del Redemptore, built by Palladio in the isle of Guidecca. It had its origin in the thankfulness of Venice for being delivered from the pestilence. The doge and officers of state came hither in procession on the third Sunday of every July. Nothing can be more remarkable than the light elegance of the interior. — "Luminous" is, I believe, the epithet ap-

plied by Eustace to the style of this artist, and it is precisely the word. The only good picture here is a Bellino in the sacristy, representing two children and the Virgin: one of the former, a little angel, is singing from a music book, while the infant Christ, in the other corner, is regarding his infant companion. From the full, round, open, infantine, but beautiful mouth of the first, there pours a gush of sound, as if it was the bellow of a child taking all the turns of lows and linked sweets of celestial music:* the Christ is the quintessence of what is pure and engaging, and serious in childish expression. It may have been observed, that in children who are well treated and in tolerably happy circumstances, there is a certain air of composure and confidence, which we would call an air of authority in men, and which arises from their ignorance of fear, and their habit of finding themselves deferred to in many of their desires. These, blind with the consciousness of weakness, with the simplicity natural to their age, and the imperfect ex-

* He repeats this expression in other pictures, and seems fond of it.

pansion of their mental powers, produce an expression of a most exquisite nature, but which, though commonly seen, is most difficult to seize. This is what the older Italian painters have given, not perfectly, but in a very surprising degree. Some of the groupes of angels hanging in festoons from clouds, will be found to present an astonishing variety of this sort of beauty — judges of three years old, soldiers of four, philosophers of two. But who shall paint this expression equal to the remembrance of it in the bosoms of those who have been most interested to observe it? Who that has closely and quietly observed the progress of an infant's mind, its developement by attaching itself like a woodbine to the old supports of the family, putting forth to-day a tendril, to-morrow a bud, next day a flower; who shall think of seeing it perfect in painting? In a child's face, curiosity and love stand like cherubs ready to fly from his eyes. His mind is ever active, and ever making new discoveries; ever rewarding its own activity, and ever seeking the assistance of others. It is the only agreeable view of existence; and to be melancholy in regarding a child, it is neces-

sary to think of him when he shall be one no longer. I have often been astonished that the *infant life* and *character* has not been taken for full poetical developement. It would be new and pleasing. Addison is said to have been much struck by this church, and I quite agree with him. Eustace speaks more of San Georgio, but I prefer the Redemptore.

San Georgio, as well as the above, is in the Guidecca; there is also another small one by Palladio in this island, where the Jews were shut up in the time of the republic. Two Tintorettos on each side of the grand altar merit observation. The portrait of the present Pope, who was elected at Venice, Rome being possessed by the French, is in this church, painted by Mateini, master of the school of painting at Venice.

The marriage of Cana, by Paul Veronese which remains at Paris by an arrangement, was in the refectory of the convent of benedictines attached to this church, which is now the custom-house. The French with much barbarity, let the church to an exhibiter of balloons, and meant to sell it for

its materials, and the merchants of the city of Venice bought it, and continue to pay a chaplain there to officiate.

Petrarch in his work, De Gestis Imperatorum, notices the ceremony of the doge's marriage with the Adriatic, and the pomp and concourse of strangers that accompanied it. Then was the time to see Venice under the doge Ziani, who died full of glory, after conquering Barbarossa for the pope. His monument is in this church, which all the doges visited after dinner on Christmas-day.

There were gardens formerly belonging to the convent, where people promenaded; now there is the new custom-house which the French made.

The view from the Canale Guidecca is astonishingly fine; people should traverse it, and place their gondola in different spots to see it in different aspects. The round minaret turrets of Saint Marco; the ducal palace, and its peculiar architecture; the marble columns; the extent of city; sails mingling with temples, Palladio's churches, and those of the crusaders; the sheet of water unbroken by sand-banks, all indicate

the queen of the ocean. London wants much of this. The fine arts with us never have been, and are not sufficiently attended to.

* * * *

The church of the Jesuits is a wonderful structure, in respect to the workmanship. The pulpit is overhung by a drapery or curtain of marble, of the most surprising workmanship: the walls are all in mosaic, of verd antique and marble of Carrara, forming a sort of papering for the walls, of beautiful execution: the steps that lead to the great altar are in mosaic, that imitate so well a carpet, that it may deceive: the grand altar is supported by eight tortuous columns of verd antique; and the tabernacle which contains the sacrament is in lapis lazuli. Here is the martyrdom of Saint Laurence by Titian, which was also taken to Paris, and returned; in the sacristie, the history of Helen, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, whom St. Jerome celebrates, in a gallant style, by the young Palma; and the roof, by Tintoretto,

figures fine and forcible. Here is the tomb of the doge Cicogna, who built the Rialto, which was commenced in 1587, and finished in 1591. He died in the "odour of holiness," says a certain author; for while he was present at the celebration of mass in Candia, the host sprung from the hands of the priest, and placed itself in those of Cicogna. There is also a beautifully simple monument of Priam de Leze. The church of La Madonna del Orto contains the tomb of Tintoretto, without inscription; and two of his pictures at the great altar, which, with that in the palace of the Doges of Paradise, are considered his chef-d'œuvres: his picture of the Slave Released by a Miracle, which was at Paris, is now in the School of Fine Arts. The large pictures in this church, are, the Day of Judgment, and the Adoration of the Calf. Behind the altar also there are several pictures by this master; and in the chapel of Contarini, there is the Assumption, by the same, which was taken to Paris. It cannot be well seen here. The Adoration of the Golden Calf is a noble picture: the figures in the air come like clouds moving in it as

their element; they seem to pass like gnats. Tintoretto wants innate force and depth: his is the force only of movement; his figures have nothing of that majestic weight and reality, that dignity of the soul, that fullness of life, which distinguish Titian. But they are rapid, hasty, and striking. His colouring pleases: his arrangements are powerful and well ordered. A prophet or patriarch, with a book on his knee, and looking up to heaven, in a picture behind the great altar, is very fine: he seems to see what men in general can scarcely imagine — what it would not be lawful or possible to utter: his eye seems to have all the force and intensity, that the actual vision of the objects of faith can give. His expression is that of severity. He seems to be one of those whose ways are not as our ways — who lived upon the manna which God caused to fall each morning — who drank of the water which gushed from the rock — and whose way was marked by a cloud and a pillar of fire: — one, in short, whose daily communication is with the God of the Hebrews, who is a jealous God, punishing to the third and fourth

generation those that hate him, and whose favourite broke in fury the tables of the law, at the sight of the idolatry of his followers. A cross traverses this picture, forming a great beauty in the composition. As for the Day of Judgment, I like not such heaps of figures.

Here is a picture by Carpaccio, in the old style, and another by Vandyke.

Simo di Conneggiano is a fine example of this old manner — reds, blues, and greens, meagre limbs, but strong style, which Tintoretto and others came in to degenerate.

The palace Grimani is well worth the notice of strangers: here are fine morsels of sculpture, particularly the statue of a Grecian orator, with his arm in his robe, from whom eloquence seems pouring in a full but unruffled stream: no violence of action, no professional oratory: not Demosthenes or Æschines, but more probably Pericles — some chief of the state, interested in the measures, and feeling his authority, yet amenable to and dependent on public opinion. A passage in Anacharsis, (chap. 14.) is quoted to show that Themistocles,

Aristides, and Pericles, remained almost immoveable on the tribune, and with their hands in their cloaks, struck as much by the gravity of their mien, as by the force of their eloquence. In the room, No. 3. there is a most exquisite roof by Giorgione, of the four elements; nothing by Titian finer. Who can see this, and think the Venetian school nothing? What is meant by telling a story? What story is told by the view of cattle in a field — a bit of an old wall — a paling — a rustic boy — a tree? Yet have not these inspired, and do they not inspire, more exquisite feelings than the Grecian daughter? The fact is, that painters generally spoil when they take a story; but there is always a story. Look at the mistress of Titian — look at one of his Venetian noblemen — look at his portrait of the doge of this very family in this palace, the Doge Grimani, and ask if no story is told. Yes, a story of human life, in grander, more striking physiognomy than usual — imagination taking its flight from a higher stand. In regarding the doge, with his cap of office, his thin, sharp, authoritative, but not kingly face, we have the

story of the republic much better than if it had been written by Voltaire:—the spirit of an aristocratical republic; an active, vigilant, suspicious, but proud and fearless republic, in which the chief ruled the citizens in the spirit of one who knew his fellow-men; who was liable to have his head chopped off by his nobles, and the bloody sword shewn to the people; and who drank out of the cup of authority with gusto because it was fresh and sparkling Nothing I could read could give me so good an idea. I saw the series of the history of the Doge Ziani, and the Pope Alexander III., in the grand hall of the ducal palace. There they wish to tell a story; but this one portrait of Titian tells the story of ducal power — of the fleets, the armies, his marriage with the Adriatic, the splendour of Venice, far better. It is not Titian's fault, if such pictures convey no story: the herbage of the field conveys no story to the sheep that crops it, but to a Wordsworth, a Thompson, a Burns, &c. the story is beautiful. In the room, No. 5. is a roof by Raphael, and Giovanni da Udine. It is the sole work of Raphael that was painted

for Venice, and he was brought hither by a cardinal of the family to do it. Here are a Cupid by Guido, and the history of Psyche, by Salviati, the Florentine, and Giacomo della Porta. Salviati has a wonderfully sweet expression in some of his female heads. There is an exquisite head by this artist in the oratory of this palace, which one might look at for ever. There is also in this chapel a good picture by Palma the elder. Some small pictures in wood by Andrea Schione, who painted them on morsels of cases, and received fourteen sols a-day. In the hall of statues there is a caricature of Socrates, which is curious.

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In the hall of the ducal palace, called the college, there is a picture by Tintoretto: — the Doge Moncenigo returning thanks for the delivery of the city from the plague: a splendid picture, without much meaning. Where painting has ever fairly established itself, it has connected itself with public feeling of the moment. Here the history of Venice is painted. Why does not Haydon do the same, or take pleasurable subjects?

The Glory of the Saint is fine. A picture by Paul Veronese, in which two figures are remarkable, a female with a cup, and a page holding up her drapery. In these, elegance of fashion and manner may be compared with Titian's innate elegance: the arms of the lady, are those of an exquisite fashionable beauty. A fine female figure over the clock. Saint Cecilia, one of the most elegant of Tintoretto's pictures. Nothing possibly can exceed the grace of the female figures here, nor of the child. These halls (now the chambers of appeal) are all elegant and rich, to the extent of imagination; chiefly, however, rich with fine art, and nothing can demonstrate more than they do, how necessary it is for national grandeur that the fine arts should enter as an essential feature into the public achievements. Here, where things are in their places, where there is no arranged exhibition, but where fine pictures take their places as *necessaries*, they strike much more than at Paris. The Rape of Europa is as flowing as Thompson's line,

> "Veil'd in a shower of shadowy roses,
> On our plains descend."

The exquisite softness and full luxuriance of Tintoretto, are exemplified in his four pictures here.

In the palazzo Barberini at Venice, is a most curious picture by Catena: a curious picture of the Circumcision of Jesus, by Gentil Bellino, brother of Giovanni. The infant's head shows repressed pain — the hands are clenched. Here is Saint Sebastian, Titian's last work, left unfinished. A San Girolamo, by Titian, in his first style, as it is called, like the old masters; fine old landscape in back ground. There are two Madonnas by the same master, very different the one from the other: one is wonderfully rich — all that can express beauty and grief mingled: landscape also, as Titian knew how. Venus, with the head of a beautiful woman, not that of a goddess, beyond every thing for loveliness and attraction, regarding herself in a glass held by the loves. Susan in the bath, by Tintoretto, is a beautiful picture.

* * * *

Mr ——— said that it was evidently the intention of the Austrians to reduce the

country to nothing; and in ten years it would be entirely ruined. With unheard-of absurdity, they have put a line of *douaniers*, between the Milanese and the Venetian states, so that the Milanese find it their interest to buy sugar from the Genoese, rather than from their fellow-subjects, the refinement of sugar having formerly been one of the principal branches of Venetian industry. They also ship their things rather at Leghorn and Genoa than at Venice. * * * The Ionians were obliged to admit the Austrians into their islands on the same footing with themselves; but it was not stipulated that they should be admitted at Venice on the same footing with the Austrians. The ————, a stubborn obstinate ———— in the hands of ministers, who rule him despotically, having given leave to an officer to marry, his minister was offended because the officer had applied to the ———— rather than to him, and dared the man to marry, though he had the ————'s permission. The man durst not. The Austrians having possessed themselves of the duty on "comestibles," which always belonged to the municipality,

and saw applied to various public purposes, the latter body were obliged to lay on a fresh duty, so that there is a difference of six sols in the price of meat at Venice and at Padua. All is lost here. In the time of the French, there were 4000 men in the arsenal; now there are 700. All the money which the French raised in the Venetian states, they employed there, and added twelve millions. The Austrians levy as much, or perhaps more than the French, and expend nothing. The president of the Chamber of Commerce told the Emperor, that the foreign wine, chiefly of the Levant, which the Venetians manufactured for Russia, &c. was all that remained to the town after so many ruinous decrees; but that lately a decree had been issued against this commerce also. "That was my own doing; my own thought; not my minister's: I will hear nothing against it." Yet there were laudatory odes composed, and the Merseria was illuminated.

* * *

Went from Venice to Ferrara by the mail-boat, which passes from the Adriatic

into a canal, and from thence drops into the Po. In the motley company of passengers, I noticed a female singer, very corpulent, though not more than twenty-seven years of age. She was attended by a little hump-backed woman, who spoke so broad a Bolognese dialect, that my fellow-travellers of Italy often were unable to understand her; and were kept in a constant roar of laughter. Meg Merrilies herself did not speak broader Scotch than this woman spoke Bolognese.—The party altogether was a striking example of good-natured merriment, and of the manner in which all classes and persons mingle in France and Italy, without enquiry and without jealousy. The only exception was furnished by two Jews, who could not eat with the rest; at first, I thought poverty prevented them, a conjecture which was corroborated by their dirtiness, but another passenger explained to me the reason, and soon afterwards they pulled out their own provision, which was sausage made of goose, as the most palatable substitute for prohibited pork. This country, particularly Modena, being famous for sausages, the poor Jews cannot resist the temptation of making

bad imitations of these unlawful dainties. * * * The female singer, and her hump-backed servant, would make a capital picture in the style of Buncle or the Spanish Rogue. They had been together at Genoa, at Rome, in France, and almost every where. During the carnival, the donna had been singing at the San Benedetto, the second theatre in Venice, and had received 800 francs for a month. At Rome she received more; and at Bologna, whither she was now going under an engagement to sing for one night before the emperor, she was to receive 1200 francs. This, as she really was not a very first-rate singer, will seem liberal remuneration. I never saw so fine an example of animal spirits — unbounded health — enjoyment of life as mere existence — and a participation in every thing, good, bad, and indifferent, yet without taking any particular stain. Such a temperament and character might be compared to those things on which dirt dries and rubs off, leaving no spot.

We had on board an army purveyor of Milan, who was in a great way during the Italian government, and who now did

nothing; he had, however, made his fortune. Not so an Italian who had served in the Italian army under Napoleon; had been present at all the last battles in Germany in 1813, Bautzen, Lutzen, Dresden, and lastly Leipsic. His pay was 500 francs a month; after the breaking up of the power of his masters, he seems to have been living as he could, and had just received a place in a regiment of the pope's at Bologna, (he being a native of that town); which would bring him 150 francs a month. Whenever an allusion was made to the past order of things, his eye seemed to kindle with a flash like that of the fallen angel's, and his gesture spoke in silence "louder than divines can preach." He had been promoted in six months from soldier to sub-lieutenant, and afterwards still farther promoted. It was in this way that Napoleon won all hearts and employed all hands. In fact, there is no more palpable rule to judge of the merits of a government than by self-interest; for as to justice and morality, though I would not be understood to deny their existence as motives with governors, they generally take too disputable shapes

to be unanimously recognized. That **** ****, **** ***, &c. &c. &c. have not in their secret thoughts any thing but the purest principle of good will and love to men, and of regard to the will of Providence and the laws of heaven, I do not deny; but all I say is, that looking at their conduct in the *ensemble*, the people of England, France, and Austria, or at least the imperfectly-informed mass in these countries, might be excused for seeing nothing so clearly defined of these highest regards, to hinder them from examining only how far the interests of each may be promoted by these persons' measures. Certainly morality and justice go before every thing else; but when they are not clearly seen, rather than take their existence for granted, people substitute that feeling which perhaps may allege for itself the text, he *that does not provide for those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.* It is not the outcry of a few men, or sets of men, who derived their profits from public calamities that ought to be attended to; but in Italy *every one* has suffered, and the generality of the suffering is such as to give

a stupendous idea of the dexterity with which the system of Buonaparte, bad and unprincipled as it was, had been contrived to give a movement and impetus to all; how, in lieu of solid and noble foundations, he had been able so well to substitute others, that extended general support, doing nothing for the *heart*, which must beat with the ethereal spirit of public liberty; how he had yet, by forced means, given an artificial circulation through the veins. His system included the corruption of character as one of its chief means; he attended to education only to sow the seeds of debasement; and to human liberty was, *intentionally*, the bitterest enemy ever known to the world. These, his great crimes, became so many grounds to admire the dexterity of the man, who, with such enormous *wants*, could do so much. The spirit of man, when left free to exert itself, goes on naturally, aiding what favours its developement; but Napoleon had no such aid, because no man ever less deserved it. In one or two points only, could he be considered as in unison at all with the spirit of his age; religious indifference or tolerance, and abolition of feodality,

In a hundred he was diametrically opposed to it, so that he was the altas to support all, trusting nothing to the principle of gravity. That this is true, may be inferred from his leaving nothing behind him, and this accounts for, and justifies the greatest degree of alienation and disgust in contemplating him. What is Buonaparte in the present day? absolutely nothing. The French revolution, wild as it was, has left its marks. Louis XIV. left his character impressed on the age; the Greek and Roman warriors and statesmen did so. But Buonaparte has passed like a meteor; in no respect was he congenial. And this, I think, tells against his genius as well as his heart. Genius always joins itself at some point or other with the great mass of human feeling; but although unpermanent and unkindly, his effects were great when they existed. He put all in rapid circulation, and made a great house on the sand, which, though it did not, and could not stand, and in fact ought not to have stood, yet he employed many hands, and afforded shelter to many inhabitants. Though much mischief was worked up in what he did, yet in Italy we see evi-

dent traces, that, with regard to this country, the assertion is true, which appears to me more than problematic in regard to France, namely, that he would have been succeeded by something better, that would have taken advantage of what he had done by power to turn it to the advantage of principles. He was producing the union of Italy, not intentionally, for he was as jealous of this as any Austrian, Pope, or Bourbon; and in making *French provinces* of the fairest and most classical part of Italy — in making the French language official at Rome and Florence, he did enough to curse himself for ever; but the name of the kingdom of Italy, the frequency of communication, common service in the army, public improvements — these were all tending to produce the spirit of union: he was training Italians to arms, and rousing them from sloth and enervation to glory and ambition. The fruits of all this would have been seen in their gaining their independence, or at least in their making such a struggle for it, that the Spanish diversion would have been nothing to that in Italy.

The soldier, now one of the Pope's, had

all the common opinions about Buonaparte not being at St. Helena, &c. and all the common calumnies against England; yet the weight of the English character generally procures respect for an Englishman.

He said, if this system continues much longer, Venice will be like Ferrara, and in Ferrara there is indeed a melancholy instance of national ruin consummated. During the progress of the change it is liable to be disputed, and its tendency may be denied; but about what *has* taken place at Ferrara there can be no dispute. Some of the descriptions of Isaiah and the other prophets, who foretell national overthrow and desolation, are alone applicable in describing its present state. The value of legitimate governments is here seen consummated; it is no libel here to point to it, unless it be on the principle, the greater the truth the greater the libel. How different its state now from what it was, when Ariosto said,

O città bene avventurosa . . . .
. . . . la gloria tua salirà tanto,
Ch'avrai di lutta Italia il pregio e'l vanto!

Prophets should confine themselves to pre-

dicting woe; it is the least dangerous course for their honour. The spectacle of Ferrara then may well turn attention to the system we see in operation at Venice. If it be so with the green tree what will it be with the dry?

FERRARA.

The palace of the dukes of Este is a large brick building, the character of the external appearance of which is a ponderous clumsy strength; an ungraceful force that seems well adapted to the idea formed of the barbarism of the middle ages in Italy, when dukes, princes, and robbers, alike rendered travelling unsafe, and life itself liable to the most fearful vicissitudes. Large masses of brick wall, with small terraces and bastions for the purpose of holding armed men, form the body of the building; while at each of the four corners is an enormous tower, projecting over the ditch, and very high. The ditch is broader than usual, and contains the water that flows in from the adjacent marshes. One of these towers is named the Tower of Lions; and under the passage which leads to it is seen, close to the water,

a low-vaulted door, the dismal appearance of which indicates its purpose. It led in the days of ducal power to the subterraneous prisons of the castle, in one of the darkest and most fearful of which Parisina was beheaded. By another passage, leading from the interior, I descended into these abysses; the narrow passages lined with thick walls seem excavated rather than built; to some of them no light whatever is admitted; the farthest one to which the visitor can reach, and to which there is a small grated window, was certainly the place of execution either of Parisina or of her unhappy son and lover. My guide, however, informed me, that it was not at present known which was there beheaded; a trap-door in another passage, leading to a fearful abyss, which has been walled-up, was also the place of execution of one. As this prison was the worst of all, it is not impossible that the wife was there beheaded; for the injured husband seems to have been most agitated with grief on account of his son. She seems to have expected to be cast into one of the subterraneous dungeons, and with a womanish feeling, cha-

racteristic of the sex, struck by accessories and incidents in the midst of the gravest principal interests, she was always asking where the place was. Like her sex too, the force of her courage was finally taken from the strength of her passion; when she was told that Ugo was no more, she broke out in cries, and said she now no longer wished to live. It is affecting to find, that the father and husband, injured by his son and his wife, when, in the midst of a night spent in awful agitation, he was informed in answer to the question that he at last ventured to put, that his son was no more, burst into similar expressions of grief, wishing death also, since he had precipitated the fate of his child, (*il mio Ugo*). Another feature of great interest in the story is, that the attachment, which had such fatal and criminal results, commenced in a journey made by the unhappy pair together, at the desire of the husband, who wished to overcome the aversion of his wife for his natural son. Another interest is added to the story for us Englishmen, by the muse of Lord Byron. This distinguishes him from all our other poets, that he has connected the

tribute of English poetry and prose with the most celebrated places of the earth, and the finest names, and the most touching stories, more than any other we have ever had, or than any other nation has ever had. He has thus united the name of England, and an Englishman, with the most celebrated points of the world's history, in a more intimate manner than any other country can boast of.

From the images and the times that the subterranean dungeons of the castle of Este recalled, I ascended to the upper apartments, where were held the circles and court of the "magnanimous Alfonso," as poor Tasso called him, with but little reason, the world thinks at present. But all was now changed: the place was now full of preparations for the Emperor of Austria and his suite, hourly expected: the tables were decorated with the Cæsars, not omitting Tiberius, Nero, and Caligula; thus honouring as princes, men that deserved to have been hung in chains for posterity; and their portraits were to be deemed a compliment to the house of Austria, because they were Roman emperors. Is it possible that

princes do not see that the world has grown much beyond this now; and that to be of the same trade, still less to be of the same line with Nero, cannot now impose on people the sentiment of respect? All was in movement, however, at the Cardinal Governor's: the soldiers of the Pope, and the Austrians, who possess all the strong places, were all busy. Compliments would be paid; but I wish he could have heard a poor man in the street, who said, "*I Tedeschi portdno sempre il malo.*" Every poor man's horse was in requisition, and the principal inn was forbidden to receive strangers, that the persons attached to the royal suite might be sure to be accommodated. Of these obstacles in the way of private convenience and independence, we have no idea in England. Princes must travel as they can, and not have this power to forbid an inn to receive travellers, except by paying for all the beds. In one of the waiting-rooms, the portrait of Dante was suspended over the fire-place, which, in such a town and castle, seemed better than the Cæsars; but why not rather Ariosto, or Tasso? Ferrara was their place.

At a stall, I saw a line of common portraits, (they were all the man had), which present an assemblage of names that will not be without its interest to an English reader, and may also serve to show how the attention of the common people in these countries is infinitely more directed to matters of taste, than their imperfect state of information and education would lead to expect. The portraits were Dante, then Alfieri, Newton, Alexander the Great, Machiavel, and Socrates. The Dante of the collection was the grandest head; Alexander the Great did not seem to me to be at all like, that is to say, the *beau ideal* seemed the foundation of its composition: Newton was not done justice to, but had nevertheless a sound, substantial, and pleasing physiognomy, very different from the Italian, but such as an Englishman might be proud to claim as characteristic of his country: Alfieri's head was that of a poet, but whims, fancies, and the art of the hair-dresser, entered largely as ingredients. The shade of Machiavel ought to bring an action for defamation against his artist; he looked like an actor for a melo-drama. Socrates was

more like Newton than Dante, in character of expression — not at all in features. I speak, be it remembered, only of those common portraits, which I had never seen before, and which have never been in England, I dare say.

From the castle of the dukes of Este, the next point is to the house of Ariosto. His paternal house is near the public library, and can be seen from one of the windows of the hall. But he built a house for himself in the Strada di Mirasola, which, as an inscription in one of the chambers imparts, after being let to common occupiers, was purchased by the municipality of the town, and placed under the keeping of a person appointed for the purpose. In the chamber understood to have been the poet's study, is his bust, underneath which is the following inscription:

"Ludovico Ariosto in questa Camera scrisse, e questa casa da lui edificata abitò. La quale CCLXXX anni dopo la morte del Divino Poeta fù da Girolamo Cicognare Podestà, co' denari del Comune comprata è restaurata, perchè alla venerazione delle Genti si mantenesse."

The walls of this room seem to have been ornamented with frescos, but a thin

whitewash has been stupidly employed in the work of restoration. Outside the house is the following inscription :—

"Parva sed apta mihi, sed nulli obnoxia, sed non
Sordida, parta meo sed tamen ære domus."

It is like all the houses in Ferrara, a brick building : it is of a decent size, with an arched door-way, a court-yard behind, and indicates comfort and respectability. It is one story high, with a disproportionate space between the upper windows and the roof, as in the ducal palace at Venice.

His monument was in the church of San Benedetto ; but the French, in their zeal to civilize the world, and instil higher sentiments, thought it sacrilege to the poetic spirit that his bones should remain in a church, and so removed them to a *school* ! Poor creatures, they did not feel, and few of them feel yet, that none of their academies, or schools, normal or polytechnic, though excellent things in their way, can be half so fitting for the conservation of poetic genius as a church, which connects itself more closely with human sympathies, even by means of erroneous belief, than ever can

systems of mathematics, chemistry, or astronomy. A tablet commemorates the removal, with this inscription:—

"Ludovici Ariosti, ossa et monumentum hinc ad Bibliothecam pub. translata, A. MDCCCI."

I went from the place of interment of Ariosto to the hospital where Tasso was confined. I found two gentlemen of Ferrara in the hall where the patients were lying, and they informed me, that the idea of the critics, that the cell in which Tasso was confined is not certainly known, is generally shared by the people of the town. The cell, with the inscription, is indeed horrible; and it is scarcely possible to imagine either that the cruelty of the duke was carried so far, or that Tasso could have resisted a confinement for years, in such a place. The circumstances urged against the claim of the cell where the inscription has been put, make equally against all the cells, and it is therefore probable that he was confined above, where there are still places of confinement for the *pazzi*. That he should have been confined at all, is bad enough; but it cannot be pleasing to

human nature to exaggerate the ingratitude and cruelty of the Duke of Este to such a pitch.

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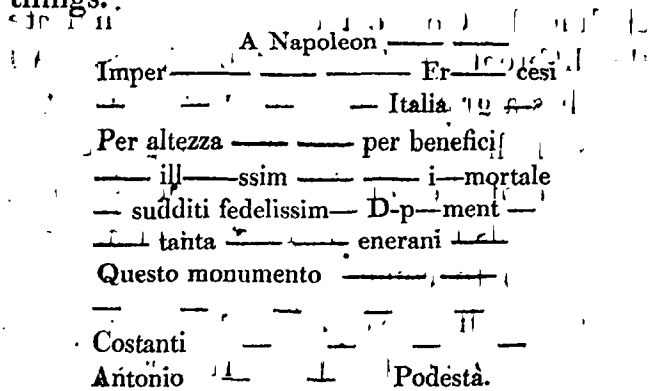
Mr. Hobhouse is wrong in considering it almost a matter of indifference, as to the guilt of the Duke, where Tasso was confined: it is a matter of high importance; for even the extravagances of a poet may irritate naturally, but the measure of punishment should never overstep all just bounds. Mr. Hobhouse, however, has apparently peculiar motives for enlarging on this history of Tasso; and I must be permitted to say, that I can consider nothing more unfair or injudicious than such allusions in such a case; which, under the shelter of another, convey allusions which play at bo-peep, as it were — now Tasso — now some one else, as it may be found most convenient. We are told that Tasso was the victim of domestic treason, and the persons are said to have been unable to appreciate either his virtues or his failings. If the same is meant to be said of any one else, above all, of the present day, (and whom, Mr. Hobhouse?) it would be more

candid and clear to say at once what virtues have been under estimated, and what vices over-rated. His writings, not intended to be published, were seized by pirates; if any body else is wished to be represented in the same case, let us be told at once, that the public may know if any writings have been unfairly seized from their private holds; for certainly it would be no unfair seizure to give general publicity to what was circulated in an unfair manner adapted to the views of the author. Select publication is not to be tolerated in England; it suits the Austrians at Venice to close the doors of the courts of justice. If nobody but Tasso is meant, all is well; but if, under Tasso's name, allusion is made to the case of a celebrated contemporary, the procedure is foolish; and, if directed against a silent woman, unmanly.

The hospital can hold three hundred patients; there were only eighty in it when I saw it. For cleanliness all was well; but the hall was miserably cold; no curtains. The women's place was better.

In the Piazza Ariostea there is a column which bore first the Pope and afterwards Napoleon; now, as my laquai de place ob-

served, " there is nobody there," *non ci sta nessuno.* The inscription in favour of Napoleon was, I suppose, ordered to be obliterated; but it is inconceivable, since the thing was thought worth doing, and it seems to follow naturally as a change of the government, that it was not better done. The half words still left are curious, and suggest curious reflections on the value of human character, and the nature of human things.



This may be as curious as worn out Greek and Latin inscriptions that our virtuosi now read in the Sun.

The man, who observed that the Germans always bring misery, said that the French were much the same; they despoiled forty convents. Two hundred houses of noble-

men have fallen into decay; only seven or eight remain. Nothing can be more striking than the appearance of the place; the aspect of the streets is magnificent; of a grand length and finely *aligned*. The houses have a grand appearance; some of them are richly ornamented with bas reliefs, statues at the corners, large gates, with architectural decorations, and the arches, belonging to different orders, including the Gothic and the Greek, indicate the different epochs of the buildings. All this has a grand and imposing effect: the gates of the town are seen closing the perspective of the long streets; the aspect of which leads us to expect Italian princes and noblemen to come out of the noble gateways and fill the splendid streets. In them, however, one or two poor creatures, one at one end, one in the middle, and one at the other, are all that can be seen. A man, with an Italian air of dignity and reserve, but poorly dressed, wrapped in a blue cloak, walks silently along these spacious avenues. The palaces are empty; the architecture falling to pieces; the court-yards filled with nuisance. From the paneless

upper window, a female head of the lower order peeps out; and in magnificent buildings, which could hold conveniently an hundred persons, the suite of a grand family, two or three paupers now burrow in the corners. This desolation was begun under the Pope, and will be finished by him. For Ferrara, the French did little or nothing; and this renders it probable, that the bad air enters for something into the cause of the desolation. The commerce, I was told, by the traveller of a large Swiss house, is nothing but for the internal consumption, and is chiefly carried on by Jews; the Italians having fairly lain down under their misery, like an ass under its burthen, and become lazy as well as wretched. The general idea seems to be, that a better chance would have been given to the town if it had been placed under the Duke of Modena, and, in fact, any thing would have been deemed better than the *government of the priests*. This is by all regarded as the supreme curse.

The Certosa (Chartreuse) is one of the many ruined convents that add another interesting feature to Ferrara: their long

blank walls, with small windows up at the roof, now tell only of emptiness and ruin. There are no monks in cowls. To be sure, now being in the papal states, the traveller begins to see barefooted capucins in the streets: one was serving in the hospital, and was very anxious to speak to me when I paid it a visit. I found there also an Italian soldier, who had served, I think he said, in the 16th regiment, and who spoke to me in English: he was getting better, poor fellow. There was a mere appearance also of religion; the clergy saluted; for the first time, I here found a laquais de place, who crossed himself: all my former laquais had been philosophical, particularly Marco, at Milan, who openly ridiculed a certificate he had from the queen of Wirtemberg for his piety. There were seats in churches prepared as if for a congregation, and the greater part open all day. The interior ground of the Certosa, above noticed, has been converted into a burying-ground, after the new plan; and among other removals the French have removed hither from the church, where they were deposited, the remains of Bernardo Barbulco, master of

Ariosto. The church is shown, but contains nothing whatever worthy of notice, unless it be a picture of the Slaughter of the Innocents, which becomes extraordinary from its being painted by a young lady of seventeen, who studied at Rome, and leaves the spectator in astonishment how any young lady could have made so horrible a composition, and how any church in *Italy* could have hung up so wretched a performance. There is something in the abomination and horror of this work that in fact confers on it distinction, and makes it haunt the mind of him that has seen it. A new idea struck the artist; it was to make Herod a smart amiable person, looking on at the spectacle. The poor young lady is dead lately.

In the Strada degli Angeli, one of the the principal streets, a few poor women were employed clearing away the grass from the pavement, that the emperor might not be shocked by the sight. I wished it to remain for his edification.

The gardens of the Palais Bevilacqua have been laid out in the most magnificent style of Italian gardening; columns, sta-

tues, fountains, and buildings show themselves amongst the walks; and superb feasts and amusements were given in the princely spot. The family is now gone away; the house is let to a *German officer* as lodgings; and the garden is closed up and gone utterly to decay. I looked through the iron grille of the gates. Some of the prophecies against Babylon, or the description of the garden of the sluggard in the Proverbs, give the best idea of the state of these gardens. The Palais Segrate is a splendid building, deserted, and falling to pieces: a school for children is held here, to which one goes through gilded doors and grand staircases; the very poorest of the people burrow in the offices. Life seems tied to death in this place.

The University or Lycée has twelve professors; and about one hundred and sixty scholars; there used to be three hundred of the latter. Ronchi, the advocate, who was president of the tribunal under Buonaparte, is professor of civil law; Gravina for the pandects; and Campana for physic and botany: he is author of a highly esteemed Pharmacopeia. These are the

three professors, the most highly rated, and they are men of great talent. The library, a fine one of 80,000 volumes, owed its existence, not very long ago, to the patriotism of a citizen, who, having a fine library of 30,000 volumes, gave it to the public establishment, when the Duke of Modena, on his going away, took all with him.

From the old ramparts, the view spreads over a flat and dull country, where land and water seems struggling for which shall be the lord. There are bulrushes seven or eight feet high; water fowls come close to the town; and when I walked along, a whole swarm of swallows, just arrived, and chirping in chorus, were wonderfully characteristic of the place.

BOLOGNA.

I HAVE said of Venice, that it was the town which more than any other sustained, by its appearance, the ideas it had excited, and I may say of Bologna, that I know none that so completely represents the features usually, I believe, attached to an

Italian town. The climate, the manners, the character of the people, are all here evinced. Even the small houses have spacious court-yards. There are paintings in fresco on all the walls and ceilings; every thing tends to ventilation and clear shining effect. The arcades that line all the streets, like the Piazzas, as they are erroneously called, of Covent Garden, and afford the means of walking sheltered from one end to the other, have a fine grand look of the middle ages. The palaces are more numerous than in any other town I have seen, and have a general air of cleanliness and excellent furnishing; from the leaning tower, (the highest, which does not lean near so much as the small,) I looked on the city and adjacent country. The Appenines rise immediately on one side of the town; but are at first only picturesque hills, covered with vines and country-houses, on the other, is the immense plain bounded by the Adriatic and the Alps, with Ferrara, Venice, Mantoua, Verona, Parma, &c., up to Milan, all lying in various parts of it; not all seen however; only Mantoua. "That is the road to Rome," said my guide. This was the

first time I had been so placed as that no town interfered to give another designation to the road. The arcades leading to the church of Notre-Dame de S. Luca, have a fine effect; behind is the Renno and its bridge.

It is said, that, during the imperial visit, Maria Louisa was ordered to quit this town because the people applauded her so much. This is not at all likely to be true; but the report shows the state of public feeling. The same was said of her reception in Venice; and it was added, that a separation in the journey from that city took place, as if it were really true that jealousy was entertained.

FLORENCE.

I SHOULD like to introduce my readers to Florence at a striking moment, for it is a very favourite place with me. I don't know whether they will think I do so, in choosing the day when the Emperor of Austria arrived. The seat of the Medicis, — the course of the Arno, — the abode of Michael Angelo, — the landscapes of Fiesole,

— have no need certainly to borrow a charm from the congress of Vienna: yet this day I am inclined to select, as one in which Florence appeared more than usually picturesque. The quays of the Arno, — the clouds of a rainy day, condensing on the Appenines, leaving the sky over the city free for the moon, — the town illuminated, — the moon over head, — the houses on the opposite side of the Arno, high and massy, with lights here and there, as in a continental illumination, which has much more effect than an English one. But the charm was on the north side: standing by the bank of the Arno, hearing the rushing of its waters, so often sung, — and by whom? You look down between the two wings of the gallery, where the Venus of Medicis, and the finest things of Grecian and Roman genius, were standing in silent but splendid beauty; and the eye rests on the old palace of the Medicis, and the frowning melancholy tower or *Campanile*, built in 1010. From the topmost towers of this donjon, flared, in a strong gusty wind, masses of flame from vessels filled with oil, while below, the great mass of the building rested

chiefly in heavy shadow and complete obscurity, broken only here and there by the flicker of a torch, the light of which was up and down, at times half extinguished, and at others suddenly heightened by the stormy gusts. This light was thus thrown in all sorts of shapes and effects on the crowd in the streets, or rather on their up turned faces, but grander far on a perspective of gigantic sculpture, which now shone out, and now was eclipsed! the David of M. Angelo; the Hercules of ——; the Fountain of ——; all of white marble, and the grandest figures I had yet seen in any town; — for instance, on the noble bronze statue of Cosmo on horseback. The old palace of the Medicis, the very name of which is enkindling, belongs to the picture; and behind was the dome of the cathedral, illuminated also, in a manner more regular and complete, the effect of which, from its height and distance, was as pleasing as the other was sublime.

Certainly the shouters before the Emperors' carriage were paid, else why should they alone raise a shout? It was not spontaneous, general, undisciplined, as in Eng-

land when the Sovereigns were there, but well managed, though paid; and the people seemed not unwilling to play the parts allotted to them. Not as in Venice, blundering degradation: here they shouted and jumped exemplarily. The only mortifying thing to the Emperor must have been that only a few seemed unaccountably taken with this passion.

Who could see Florence, seated as she is, on the banks of the Arno, with such a climate, such a landscape, such a people, and such a history, and not rejoice that she had received back her monuments, — that her gallery was "itself again?"

ROME.

Sunday, 28th. — Saw Lucien Buonaparte: a fine shrewd reflecting head, like his brother. It is something to see remarkable men in the streets, when walking out, coupled with the heads of women and girls, and their interesting and melodramatic costumes. The regular Roman plebeian costume is a smart spencer, laced and trimmed as for the theatre, pendant ear-rings,

large buckles, and long black locks. The lower orders are divided in Rome, into the Trasteverini — Monteciani — Popolani — Romani. [illegible] and heard two men disputing amongst the ruins of the Temple of Peace, whether it was built by St. Peter and St. Paul, or St. Paul alone. Eastlake's model had won off above a million of years from purgatory, by going up the Scala Santa, which was brought over from Jerusalem. I was struck with the picturesque appearance of people to-day of lower orders, at the back of Coliseum in the garden.

Saint Peter's. — Grandeur of place in front. Statues on the colonnade good; — have here a good effect; — on the roof are bad, — have a bad effect. Obelisk and fountains fine. Grandeur of steps seen from a distance. The ancients not supposed to have understood grandeur of steps. Fountains in this climate are in their place. I must notice critically the regrets of Eustace and others, that we have not fountains in London. As in the poetry of the Psalms, fountains in Italy are felt to be delicious things. How to contrive them is best understood in

Italy: I have seen nothing in France so good. By being strongly compressed, the water gushes out with more force, and then spreads off into a foam whiter than usual from this very force, which appears beautiful against the blue sky, and the green trees standing up behind. In What pigmies men appear in this place!

The outside of Canova's house is stuck with old fragments, statues, and bas reliefs. These are very common in Rome. On entering into the studio, one is astonished by the number of the pieces, indicating a life of industry and of success, cheered by constant encouragement, and great popularity with all classes.

ARENOP. Reale nel Palazzo Gennetti.

On going through the fine arched gateway, one enters on a magnificent, or what was a magnificent terrace, the parapet of which is lined with statues from the antique. Some of them, I believe, are really antique. The view extends across to the Appennines over a wooded plain, covered with small houses, and downwards along the whole

extent of the Pontine marshes, flanked by the Mediterranean, spreading out in a magnificent style, under the dominion, as it were, of the promontory of ——; which rises alone on its flat shore, while far distant, shadowy among the waters, appear the mountains of the Santa Felice islands.

The people here seem the inmates of a poor's-house rather than of an inn. The grounds, in a fine slope, show the appearance of what were once avenues and shaded walks, just to be traced among mounds of earth, weeds, and dung. Broken statues and trunks of pillars, rise up among ill-planted brocoli and a few nursery trees. In the wing there is a line of statues with mire on their heads. A magnificent marble stair leads to fine galleries with caryatides.—Filth, poverty, and wretchedness, poking out their gaunt visages amidst the faded splendour of architecture, and the expanse of smiling, but unimproved, neglected nature. The walk after dinner at Velletri was most interesting. The weather in March had an elastic genial warmth, a sweet playing about the eyes, a glow divested of sultriness, a purity of sky, answering as a beau-

tifying reflector to all the objects of the earth, of which English weather never gives an example. Such towns as Velletri strike us the more, because we have none such; with us small houses and a certain meanness of workmanship announce the poor country places: here the houses are large, ornamented; court-yards, entablatures and balconies; yet the population has the universal appearance of being wretched, or at least poor, to a degree of unemployed, hopeless, unvaried poverty, of which the thing must be seen to afford an idea. One wanders up steep streets and down steeper, and at doors and windows are seen large, strong-featured women in glaring coloured rags, and children with a few clouts, so scarecrowish, that the holding together of the fragments on their bodies, however imperfect, is wonderful. Let those who delight to muse on the varieties of things, and to contemplate the wayward accidents of life, think of these people in their daily existence; men, and women, and children, thus herding together. Day follows day, and the world elsewhere is occupied in discussions of taste, theatrical criticism, parlia-

mentary debates, pamphlets from St. Helena, &c.; while the people of Velletri, on the edge of the Pontine marshes, with the line of the Mediterranean on their left, are herded in their said unvaried town, with nothing to chequer, enliven, or instruct.

I am perhaps, however, wrong in saying so. Going past the door of the church, I heard a priest's voice declaiming with most sonorous force. On entering, I saw the commanding fine figure of a sturdy capucin, with a rope round his middle, sandals on his feet, naked above, and placed not, as is usual, in a pulpit, but on a stage, with an elegant chair behind, his whole body from the head to the feet exposed, and his action, thus becoming more commanding than it can possibly be when only half the person appears out of a round tub, which pulpits in general are. This was the first instance of this stage-preaching which I had seen in Italy, but the effect was so fine, that I am surprised it is not more general. According to custom, there was a crucifix by the side of the orator, and his action of hand was with more force than respect di-

rected towards the effigy. He seemed to know that his hearers, gaunt women with flat linen cloth on their heads, and wild looking men from the Appenines and from the long pestilential flat between the town and sea, probably forming the brigand population of this singular country, required strong doses; his eloquence was of the unflinching kind; his object seemed to be, to shake their souls as one would shake a phial, without stopping to look if it were all right. His congregation was numerous and most attentive.

Leaving the church, and pursuing my walk round by the old ruined ramparts, the the view towards the sea became like enchantment. The islands of the Mediterranean were lighted up by the setting sun, and seemed glorious shadows of some more glorious substances than the imagination could master. The Volscian mountains on the east side, forsaken by the light, threw out their black woods in the clear air, as if in defiance; the line of the Mediterranean, in the west, took a gentle, gleaming, soft character, in comparison with these romantic fastnesses; the track of the Pontine

marshes, apparently lower than the sea, stretched between the two; the mountains and the water, stained with a picturesque diversity of colours, according with tilled land, pasture, desert, shrub, or fen. The vapours, which, from the known character of the place, assume a moral effect, a living pestilent capacity, were commencing to rise and congregate. The village of Cora lay against the first elevation of the hills, surrounded still by Cyclopean walls, whose huge masses of stone have no cement; subterraneous passages through their heart, and the remains of two fine temples, one dedicated to Hercules, and the other to Castor and Pollux. Yet Cora, being now out of all route, is never visited. The early moon rose, though the sun's light was yet visible: it seemed the only thing I knew in the scene. I made it the confidant of my wonder, for its face was familiar, and I knew it was intimate with those whom I love, and him whom I have lost. Going on to the gate of the town, I met two rows of young Jesuits, clad in purple, and if not in fine linen, clean linen, which gave them a marked distinction in this place. They

seemed the lords of the land: they were lords under priests, and their deportment was that of decorous clerical pride. On looking at this order, and thinking of the Pope and his cardinals, in connection with the state of the people, one must ask, Are the latter wrong to rob? A worldling would say, No, certainly: that is their way of playing the game of life against those who, by unfair means, have got all the trumps in their hands. When this is the case, one must stretch out one's hand to get some of the stakes by force. Gay understood this philosophy well when he wrote the Beggar's Opera.

The bells of the Ave Maria struck up in the town, which was now behind me. From the narrow strange-looking roads from the marshes and the hills, issued peasants, men, women, and children, with jackasses, that covered the road towards the gate. Their costume was wild and rude. The sun sunk entirely: the marshes confounded themselves in misty equality with the sea: the moon assumed an ascendency in the deepening blue of the sky. Coming back through the streets which I

have described, ruined buildings, and towers of the fortifications — (the fortifications of the town which gave Coriolanus confidence against his country) — became more striking objects in the gloom, than they were when I passed them by day-light; for in walking along between inhabited houses, the eye was often caught by arches, and half windows, with the sky in them, as frames, clear, cold, and lonely. . .

I forgot to mention, passing by the fine palace of the Commune, almost all now in ruins, like the other: with prisoners — such brigands as Gonsalvi went to treat with — confined in ruined rooms, and coming to the windows laughing, to beg charity.

Sunday. — Breakfast in a bath in sight of Caprea. The tombs of Virgil and Sannazaro on the right; the capes Sorrento and Campanella on the left; Caprea in the middle. From the platform before the church of Santa Maria del Parto, where Sannazaro is entombed, the view is magnificent. The whole basin of the bay is characteristically called *crater* by the Neapolitans. Barks with white sails, coming down between the islands of Caprea, Ischia,

and Procida, give animation to the scene. At the bottom of the bay, Vesuvius emits fine black columns of smoke at intervals; stretching his giant base to the sea . . . vast tracts of lava variegating the colour of the mountain . . . sprinkled with towns daring the fury of the volcano, in fondness as it were, though often sufferers. Portici, the Torre del Greco, the Torre dell' Annuziata, &c. . . . . Sweeping round the fine oval to the right, is the town of Naples rising as regularly and symmetrically beautiful as an amphitheatre, with villas crowning the height, and the castle of St. Elmo forming the finest part of the diadem. Jutting out below into the water, is the narrow strip on which stands the castle del Uovo. On the opposite coast, the bay is beautifully rounded and crowned by mountains, while lights and shadows play on the white towns that all the way border the sea. Behind the mountain of Castellamare is the ruined town of Stubia. To this place of position the noise of Naples reaches.

After going on by a road winding along the shore; after passing the shell of an un-

finished palace, begun by the Princess Anna, and projecting over the sea, with the finest view from window-gaps; after passing *massures*, that were palaces, and are now the kennels of poor fishermen, with a few villas of the Neapolitans; after admiring, at each step, the views behind, on each hand and in front, Sorrento opposite, I ascended to a small village called Marochiano, by a foot-path leading through vineyards, almond-trees in bloom, and broom of odoriferous scent. Marochiano is a fishing village. Here is an antique pillar; and below the rock projecting into the sea, I saw some stone-work, on some of the farthest fragments of which, men were standing angling. I made my way towards them with some trouble; the water was deep, but clear as diamond, the waves gently dashing against the fragments of lime-stone; the foundations, or divisions and rooms, visible below the tide; and this is said to have been the house of Lucullus. About here were his celebrated fish-ponds. Here were his pictures, his statues, &c. Now the waves break over the spot; and I, nearly 2000 years after his death, wrote

these notes seated on the ruin of perhaps one of his favourite rooms, the water of the sea touching my feet.

I took a boat here. * * * * * * . All the houses in view, even those of the poor, have a grand look, and are evidently the remains of elegant places.

On the approach to the school of Virgil, fallen masses of stone-work show themselves below in the sea. The school opens into a small bay, and on the site of the ruins stands a hermitage, having three picturesque figures of saints. The hermit was gone when I was there; but he usually comes to beg alms. After passing round the rock on which it is built, and on which are the remains of a fortress, we see immense excavations, said to have been made by Lucullus. Here is a view of the island of ——, the promontory of Miseno, the Lazaretto, &c.

Returning between two of these rocks by a footpath, through a vineyard, I found the hill composed of magnificent ruins. The walk led through a beautiful country. There were fig-trees with their broad-green leaves just coming, almonds, &c., and at a

turn of the road there is a fine view of the point or cape of Pausilipo. In front is Baia; a little forward is the town of Puzzuoli; behind is a round regular looking hill, Monte Nuovo, which was once a village called Tupergola. The convulsion made the two lakes, Averno and Lucrino, which before were but one. The promontory of Miseno seems joined to land by an artificial causeway; but this effect is produced by fragments of rock. All the earth here shows signs of nature's fierce convulsions.

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With all their gesture, laziness, and love of amusement, the Neapolitans are evidently not frivolous like the French. There is more real sentiment in what the Neapolitans do.

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In the Hermit's Album of Mount Vesuvius, I observed that the Germans were the

longest, the French the most particular in regard to their own conduct at the crater; and the English divided between the simple inscriptions of their names, and of coarse jokes. The Americans were mean. One of our countrymen recorded, that he had made his way with great trouble to the top of Vesuvius, and *found it was a burning mountain!* After a list of some English names, to which was added "have all been here to visit Vesuvius," was added, in another hand, "*and Henry Bushe has been here too.*"

In the island of Ischia, on the Priest's Balcony, with the Elysian Fields and the promontory of Miseno in front, the lake of Acheron and the Stygian stream a little on one side, with the beautiful basin of the Bay of Lacco, I listened to a woman of the island, singing loudly one of her country songs. How like the Scotch — how different from the French! Reading to-day, also, (*Sunday, 10th April,*) Mattei's Dissertation on the poetry of the Hebrews, I was struck with the want in France, generally, of all that is most characteristic of original *verve* and inspiration in all other

nations. Let any one read what he says of music of Hebrews, also the freedom of their poetry, and see how different they are from French. Scotch music how different! German how different! Italian how different!

The letters by English travellers in Scotland, in the year 1775, I believe, show a national state far behind in civilization, almost as much so as the present state of the country about Naples; yet how different the state of the national morality! What is the cause of this? How far are the Catholic and Protestant religions concerned in the difference? The behaviour of government also? What a disgrace to a government to have such subjects! and what is it itself? It is impossible not to see here: and seeing, it would in me be rascally not to state, — that the French were introducing a gradual change for the better in the national character; which progress seems discontinued under the restored system. Courage was beginning — an indispensable virtue amongst men, being connected with the point of honour, as

chastity is among women. This would have put down the use of the knife, which exists amongst no brave people. The Maltese attach much importance to the English sailors from their never using the knife. In France, the power and influence of Buonaparte came to do harm in every respect. It put down the spirit of liberty; and by its flashy melo-dramatic effect, chimed in with, and heightened, all the worst part of the French character; increased its tendency to the false, heightened its vanity, rendered it still more artificial, unsubstantial, shallow, and preposterous than it was. The Italian condition was not in so good a state, so that Buonaparte's influence could not spoil any of its tendencies; and the Italian character, having more depth and innate force than the French, was not liable to be so spoiled. The people were precisely at a point requiring some regenerating conqueror to come amongst them, to lay with an iron hand the foundations of a new state.

Walking amongst the beautiful views of Puzzuoli, of Baia, of Miseno, without a decent road, or place of refreshment, or

garden, or villa, — can an Englishman help thinking how very different would be the state of these places if they were in the hands of his countrymen. The French might, perhaps, say the same; but take the environs of Paris and those of London, in regard to accommodation and improvement, and see how different. Give us Ischia and all the neighbourhood of Naples, with our gentry, bankers, and merchants, our parliaments and people, and what a country it would be!

The peasant who conducted me from the town of Ischia to Lacco, seemed to have imbibed the general idea against England, or he was rather hostile to her in feeling; but doubtful and mysteriously admiring. He said the English were very strong by sea, meaning to imply that we were not very strong by land. Said we took Ischia and Procida; but that we did not come to take these islands, but to take *Naples*, which we did not take.

The inscriptions in the hermitage of Vesuvius, as well as the book at the priests, and the various albums, &c. all along the roads, prove that while England is the great foun-

tain of travellers, Germany shares largely with her, and also Russia. The Russians, or the Muscovites, as the Italians call them, in particular, are said to be very munificent travellers. The Germans rate under the English, who generally now rate under the Russians. Of the French, though a number of their names and inscriptions are found, they are evidently inferior in number and consideration to the other nations abovementioned. They seem more soldiers or commercial travellers, who go to see Vesuvius amongst other things, and write sentences in albums, distinguished by their impertinence. My laquais de place spoke to me of the profusion of the French military, and, on my asking the means, said it was plunder. What he said, may give an idea of extent of plunder. He affirmed, that the laquais de place were better off then than now, and declared the innkeepers and restaurateurs would all say the same.

At Ischia, in the evening, on the Priest's Terrace I viewed the light opposite, on shore of Elysian fields; admired the beauty of the moon over Vesuvius * *

* * * The women much prettier in these islands than on the main: they wore the Greek dress. The coiffure is curious: some English have taken it with them. The worst circumstance attending the antiquities of Rome, is, that one is not contented to take them as they are; but that they are at every step a subject for the battling of antiquarians; your feelings are checked by their doubts; you are afraid of falling into an error as to a name, if you should give way to enthusiasm; and as nothing is more chilling than to be wrong, you take pains to be right as to history, which obstructs sensibility. Another disadvantage is, that Rome is so celebrated a place, such a centre round which imagination has been so long turning, that we are always questioning ourselves if we feel enough? We are afraid we do not feel enough, and say, "Am I enough of an enthusiast?"

At the small town of Forio, in the island of Ischia, I saw a sort of municipal religious ceremony, performed on occasion of Easter Sunday. The scene was in the market-place: the windows were crowded with women with singular head-dresses, trimmed

jackets, and immense ear-rings. There was the image of the Virgin paraded, and other images. This, among a people just adapted for it, was very striking: the people were suited to the religion, and the religion was suited to the people. The town flag was carried up to salute the Virgin; and while its weight was supported by some sturdy fishermen, the form of carrying it by means of ribbons attached to the staff, was devolved to the aristocracy of the place, that is to say, persons who were the owners of fishing-boats, the proprietors of small vineyards, &c., who, on this occasion, wore clean blue coats of coarse cloth, and boots. Their air of superiority over the others was apparent, and might be philosophized upon. Much cry has been raised about equality, and the spirit of inequality is perhaps the most radical of all in the heart of man. My laquais de place at Naples, having taken a poor boy to assist him in carrying some of my things in a small excursion I made, loaded the child with the bag, the books, and the great coat, reserving only the umbrella for himself, — an unequal distribution, which I in some measure rectified.

Observe the waiter in his demeanour toward the "Boots," that of the coachman toward the horse-keeper or groom, and then go and write like a blockhead, that kings are monsters, and Vesuvius a proof of the goodness of Providence.

* * * *

In going from Rome to Naples, I passed near the place where Marius was found by the soldiers of Sylla. The account given by one of my companions, of the behaviour of the English troops, was amusing. When the paymaster said to him the first day, "You shall be paid to-morrow for this," he doubted, or rather thought his property was lost; but he found that the English kept their words. My other fellow-traveller, who was a weaker man, expressed great astonishment at my travelling alone, and so far from home:—"If any accident should happen to me!" This he said in a whisper to the others, and in their country dialect, so as to disguise his meaning to me. "They are not Catholics the English, I believe?" he added; and there was a general look

round the coach from one to the other, as if he had said they eat human flesh, and ought not in politeness to have run the risk of being heard by me. No person ventured to speak. After waiting a minute, I took courage to reply, that we were not Catholics. "But you believe in God and in heaven," said the strong-minded man. "Yes," I said, "and also in the devil, and in his infernal residence." The philosopher *nudged* the other with his elbow,—"Do you hear that?" They all looked at me, as if they wished me to go on, but were afraid of hurting my feelings, by asking questions that might force me to avow our inferiority. "We do not believe in the Pope," I said; "that is to say, we do not believe that he has the power of forgiving sins, or that he is exempted from committing them." "Do you hear that?" said the philosopher, in a tone as if he thought much might be argued in our behalf. The other drew up his lips into a perfect nonentity of expression, as if, between the English on one side, and the Pope on the other, the best way was to get as far as possible from an idea. A

lady in the corner, who could have kept in constant employment all the indulgences of all the cardinals, suddenly broke out as if she had just got her cue: "Well, and don't we see here, that the Pope and priests can let a man marry his sister if he likes, and permit any enormity they please; but if one has not friends with them, bad is our case for the least sin." The philosopher nodded his head, and the other again drew up his lips, as if he could not deny, and did not wish to meddle or assent. "Do you believe in the Virgin?" said a hitherto silent man, who seemed afraid things were going too much in favour of the English, and wished to give them a turn the other way. I found by the expression in the regards of all, that this was a decisive moment, and that on my reply all depended. "Yes, that we do," I answered; "we believe she was a virgin, and a mother at the same time." "What would you have more?" said the philosopher, in a tone of triumph: the lady looked the tenderest approbation. My weak friend might have sat for Felix, at the moment he said, "Almost thou persuadest me," &c. The victory was mine,

and England's. I felt, however, that good faith demanded some farther explanation. "We believe, of course, that she was a saint, and is now in heaven; but we do not believe that she shares the divine nature, or that she has the right of interceding for our sins: and we do not pray to her." The lady looked as if she was sorry to hear this; the philosopher as if he was *determined* not to think ill of us, whatever way the force of facts might be; the weak-minded drew up his lips again, but this time with a certain decision of expression that was before wanting. After an instant of silence, he opened them to ask me where Buonaparte now was; the other subject I found was considered as settled. The punches in the side given by the philosopher to the other, and his "Do you hear that?" were very amusing.

* * * *

From the window of the Priest's Balcony, (*Sunday the* 10*th*), regarding the clear blue sea below, I saw, in a moment of gentle breeze and bright sunshine, a brigantine on

the water, in the middle of the immense bay, on the northern side of that of Naples, formed by the promontory of Misenum and that of Gauta. Nothing ever better realized Wordsworth's lines:

> A glittering ship, that had the plain
> Of ocean for her vast domain.

There is in great poets a certain *soul* of truth, that in others is wanting. Good description may be given without it, but the characteristic touch, the thing we most feel, and can least express, is only given by the master's hand. Wordsworth has more of this than any living writer; more of those expressions, that connect themselves for ever with the objects noticed, and flash upon the mind at the moment of observation with a power like that of lightning. The sails of the brigantine in the sun, the stateliness of her port, her gentle yet commanding motion, as if she was master of herself and all about her, her superiority over the expanse in which she moved, her singleness in it, her fitness for it, — all gave to her the look of power and sovereignty. This quality of great poets which I alluded

to, is also noticed by Hazlitt, though not expressly, when he says, that in Milton's description of the moon,

> Like one that had been led astray,
> In the heaven's wide pathless way.

there is an internally felt truth of description, as if he had gazed himself blind in looking at her. There is the same power in Pindar on the sun, when he describes that orb as placed in the deserts of air. I do not intimate that the last is copied from the first, but the thought is almost the same. There are not many such lines in any of our other poets.

> "And smiling, as if earth contain'd no tomb,"

is one by Lord Byron.

* * * *

[NOTE.—*An intervening part of Mr. Scott's journal is written in pencil, and is not distinctly legible. It seems to relate to an inspection of Portici.*]

* * * * *

ROME REVISITED.

I WALKED along the Corso, past the Piazza Colonna along by palaces to the Capitol Hill and Forum. Leaving the Capitol Hill on one side, you come round its base to the arch of Severus.

Looking on the pillars of the Temple of Concord, and those of another. Here is a short street leading up to the capitol—these are the stones on which Cicero must have trodden. The town opens upon you its strange, wild, encumbered, untidy desolation. At the pillar of Phocas, the ground dug into shows sections of houses, foundations, pediments; below are the stones of the street Pilea, broken and cut through, lying crosswise and lengthwise, and all sorts

of ways. Farther on are the fine pillars of Jupiter Stator, and a little farther on still, at the corner of the road leading up to the Palatine Hill, is the arch of Titus, under which the Jews would not pass. The ancient stones exist, or have been laid down again, so that it has the appearance of the old passage. On the other side is the *Gran Portico* of the Temple of * * *, with a church within it, of miserable architecture, to reflect glory on the ancients by contrast. On this side, but further on to the Coliseum, are the ruins of the Temple of Peace—grand and striking arches. They were the first I saw in Rome. I paid a visit by night to the Coliseum. After having passed the arch of Titus, the Coliseum opens in all its glory. Its impression is equal to its fame; its picturesque effect is equal to its historical interest; which cannot be said of many of the ancient monuments of Rome. Unity seems its great charm, which is probably always the sublimest quality in works of art, as variety is in those of nature. Nothing is broken in the lines of its design; nothing at variance in the principles of its construction.

At the corner of the road, beyond the arch of Titus, on the other side from which it is first seen, is the ruin of the temple of Venus, and an elegant semi-circular recess, being probably the end of the temple, and the place of the goddess herself, with the top of its arch cut into diagonal compartments, that had, no doubt, all the beauty and splendour which gilding and stucco could give; while, below, she would be in beautiful white marble, receiving the adoration of votaries, who were probably more fervent to her than to many other of the deities. Seated, as Janus, on a fragment of a fine marble capital, the scene presented itself, as from a favourite point of view, with the greatest effect; to the left, below the ruins of the Palatine Hill, which seems composed entirely of the enormous rubbish of Nero's golden house, is the arch of Contantine; on the right, the most perfect part of the Coliseum, being a portion of the exterior wall, towering in simple strength, and easy height; the bases of its pillars, and the projecting cornice of each story being garnished with bushes and wall-flowers. Immediate in front, the external

wall being broken down, there opens a passage for the view into the vastness of the interior. The door of the den for the beasts, and the dungeons for the men, open in blackness under the vast arches. The arena partially discovers itself. The bare-footed mendicant friar, in whose care the place is left, often crosses the various apertures, as he goes with his rope round his middle to interrupt the casual passengers, to beg a *baiocca*. While I was on the spot, a female of the lower class from the country, evidently borne down, not so much by age, (for she was not above thirty-five,) as by labour, poverty, and sorrow, kneeled before each of the fourteen altars, and appeared occasionally in this posture of prayer through the window and arches. Round in the back ground, from the arch of Constantine, in a panoramic semi-circle to the other extremity, is a beautiful range of gardens and walks. The dark cypress and pine rise above the lighter leaf of the fig and vine, the circle rising backwards precisely like an amphitheatre; and forming its lost height by the elevation of ruined aqueducts and other constructions, the vast masses of whose brick-

work show their dark rich red among the green of the caves. An observer must be very unlucky indeed, not to see large flocks of from forty to fifty apes or wild hares, driven by one or two men, also mounted with long poles like cossack's spears, that have come down from the mountains with small burthens, and go galloping and kicking, and playing all manner of antics back, forming now the only trooped procession that pass under the triumphant arches through which Numidian kings, Gauls, and Britons were led captives. The frequency of the appearance of these troops gives a most picturesque effect to the walks about Rome. Advancing under the shade, out to the base of the mighty fabric, its grandeur becomes more apparent and overpowering. The hue of its stone in one of those mellow reds so effective in picture; the deep hue of time, not stained as, in northern parts, the colour of time always is. Looking up the highest part, the eye shrinks under the mass of height, while the beauty of the oval retiring lines leads it onward. Looking inward through four distinct ranks of arched porticoes, (ruin mighty and majestic!) are to be seen in opened aqueducts broken

doorways, fragments of staircases, &c. The thickness of the mass of wall formed the third division, where the dungeons and dens were; it gives the most astonishing idea of the industry and wealth of the Romans. The fallen stones are great rocks. The entablatures are sufficient to build cottages with their own materials. I advanced into the arena; we find it surrounded by the fourteen altars which were intended, it is said, to protect it from nuisance and depredation by consecration; between these are fragments of pillars and capitals set upright on their ends. In the middle is a large crucifix with the following announcement: "Baciando la santa croce si acquista due cento giorni d'indulgenza." The antique stairs which are seen descending into the arena appear too dangerous to try; but I saw another where the friar resides, and by which he makes a sally on the visitors. There is a wooden staircase by which one may mount and roam through the immensity of this building, interrupted by occasional chasms opening into the depth below. At Verona the regular graduated interior, with all its seats up to the very top,

remains. It is not so in the colisium, for the passages are all laid open, the external covering in which the seats were placed is gone. Seated on some projecting mass, looking out on the arena and the surrounding wall, nothing can be imagined more grand. The diversity of height, and the variety of remaining parts, as ruin has struck heavily or lightly on particular parts, produce all sorts of effects. But nothing can equal the external wall, remaining in all its proud towering height, sweeping in fine elegant rounded delicacy round the great interior, presenting a vastness of circumference with a lightness of extent, for which there is no word but sublime; the rich red line of the brick-work, and the mellow tints of the enormous square blocks of stone, the size of which seems to be the great constituent of strength in Roman building, add a great charm to the picture. On the last corner of this noble external wall, where it is abruptly broken off, and the eye falls down on the lower degrees of the building, a large bush of yellow flowers, waved in the wind when I saw it, and foliage, with delicate stems of bushes, moved in the wind all around. Lower down on the oppo-

site side, the elevation of the amphitheatre is more broken down; its internal anatomy (to use the expression) is more laid open: the open stairs are wide, and present views of the Celian hill, with trees and gardens. Here the arches, windows, and holes, assume all the lightness of Arabesque; a honeycombed reticular look, in which space is larger than substance, and there are only small connecting links between the views. The looking out into open air, through their even flat surfaces of every kind, within all the graduated ascent of pillars and arcades, the very perpendicular walls themselves in many places are covered with the richest and most beautiful vegetation, which takes its place finely with the colour of stone and brick; between the high projecting points and ruined mass, the bushes wave, and stoop, and rise, as the breeze that chills through the vast deserted corridors, passes over them. The rich mass rests on the fragments, the grass encroaches on the arena. The size of this is vast, as may be judged of by the small insignificancy of the figures of men and women, praying before the altars or passing across it; but the

beauty of its oval symmetry is such, that its size does not render itself apparent, as in less proportioned constructions. It is awful to contemplate this space, when one thinks what took place within it. From the height, however, grandeur and beauty chiefly strike you: it is in walking round the passages below, that the horror of its purpose chiefly assails the mind. Ruin is here strewed about in frightful desolation; we look down through holes to canals, where water flowed to wash away blood; the yawning mouths of the cells open upon you; those with small square doors built into tremendously thick walls are dungeons, which the imagination peoples with the miserable human victims of a horrible sport, and of a sucession of tyrants, whose history leaves us lost over human nature. The great aqueduct is in one place laid quite open; you can go down to it by steps. The look of the place here below, obstructed as the view is by fragments, &c. has more that of a gloomy wilderness; but emerging again into the arena, lightness and symmetry strike you. Unity is the charm: the oval is favourable to it.

* * * * *

I must notice three different effects of weather in the view of the Coliseum — an Italian day, sun bright, blue sky, moonlight, deep shade; pale illumination of parts; solemn walks through the passages. Thunder storm, burst of noise through the corridors; clouds sweeping over the summit; rain pouring on fragments; owls and pigeons, frightened from their resting-places, taking a sudden flight halfway across, and then back again. The friar showing himself from the door of his cell.

* * * *

I was amused with the account given me of Lucien Buonaparte's mode of living in his family, his romping and rolling with the children. He speaks of England, and says, of all countries he should like to live there, if he were rich enough. He has eleven children. When his mother, Madame Letitia, dines there, nobody is admitted. Louis also sees no one whatever. Perhaps he has some feeling of a king about him;

and there are persons who are doubtful of his intellect.

* * * *

These are the circumstances related of the carrying away of Prince Lucien's secretary: — Eleven men rushed into the hall; he had been there just a minute before, and the children had but just gone up stairs. The secretary professed to be an artist, and they gave him a pencil to try him, on which he drew the portrait of the chief. A man came into Torlogna's bank, and presented the draft. Lucien can't live at his Tusculum, on account of this: *she*, in particular, as is very natural, is much frightened. The Emperor of Austria, when he saw it, said, "In so delightful a place why don't he live?" it was replied, that the brigands would cause a dread of being carried off. "Ah, that is very disagreeable," said he. —— Gonsalvi replied to the Englishman who made application about a robbery, "While there are forests and mountains, there must be robbers."

Saint Peter's. — The obelisk in the middle

without hieroglyphics, clear, plain, and high; on one of its faces is this inscription.

Christus vincit,
Christus regnat,
Christus imperat,
Christus, ab omni malo,
Plebem suam
Defendit.

Above this, among some worn out words, one can make out DIVO CAESAR. Gibbon is indeed right; the cross has triumphed over the eagle.

In the progress through the whole of this "pile of state," every thing is calculated to place men in a trivial small light, and by contrast to aggrandize the buildings. Going up the staircase, if by chance you turn and look down the long row of lofty pillars and passages running down upon the place, you regard as pigmies the men and women entering or going out, or seated at a distance. Being in the same building, one cannot believe them so far off, for we are not accustomed to such large buildings. They are therefore rendered little and poor, and the fabric is exalted in our idea. One commences to go quickly up a staircase:

Why should not one? "But, Lord, sir, it never finishes!"

You go into the first long gallery, full of funereal inscriptions and tombs; all sorts of devices, &c. of the former stuck in the walls. The ancients were simple in their funereal inscriptions, scarcely even expressing emotion, yet pathetic and sublime from brevity. The view from the window about the middle of this gallery is wonderful. Before you the round mass of Hadrian's tomb, a noble object; far onward, on the Monte Trinità, the Villa Medici, with its **** turrets at each end of its square-lined roof, with regular fine lines of spreading round pines, and tall spiry cypress behind, with all the variegated and rich foliage of the gardens of the Villa Borghese. The intermediate space between Hadrian's tomb and this, is filled with masses of fine white buildings, and great intervals of green, owing to the gardens, fields, &c. that occur in the very heart of Rome. To the left is Monte Mario, with its villa rising beautifully over the Tiber, while a circular back ground is formed of the blue Sabine hills, with castles on their small eminences, and

towns at their base, and the bleak and snowy Appenines behind, surmounting all and binding all in! Then to form an idea of the actual effect of all this, the reader must think of an Italian sky, purity of air, clear outlines, and long shadows from high buildings.

In the middle of this first gallery, is the door into the library of the Vatican.

Passing it, you enter into a second long gallery, finely lighted, for the purpose of showing the statues and busts with which it is filled. The length of the two together seems more than that of the Louvre. Some of the busts of the Roman ladies put one very much in mind of Letitia, Buonaparte's mother, and Canova has turned her into Agrippina.

You ascend then up a flight of stairs, with the walls all arabesqued, and enter through a door, with the name of Pius the Sixth on it, into the first chamber of the famous Museo Pio Clementino; and the first object is worthy of it—the actual tomb of Scipio. The inscription is plain; the tomb of common stone. A number of inscriptions of the family are on the walls.

In the middle is the Torso, the supposed school of Michael Angelo. You pass into a rotunda, with a fine Greek vase in the centre, supported by beautiful sea-horses, and mutilated statues in corners beyond in the chamber, corresponding to that in which is the tomb of Scipio, is the celebrated Meleager. No crowding here of figures; no tiring of the eye. Fine spacious free and airy halls; a few in each. Turning out from these, one enters into a fine light clean, pure, and spacious court, with a fountain playing in the middle. The portico is lined with antique baths, recumbent statues, columns of porphyry, granite, and marble, and beautiful bas-reliefs. One of the baths has a most exquisite *Danza Bacchica* in bas-relief. The court itself is surrounded by statues, and at each of its four corners is a chamber, containing the most prized treasures of the museum. Turning to the right, we find, (as in a temple consecrated to themselves,) two small doors for entry, the light from the top, through a shade, (suggesting a difference from Paris,) the three masterpieces of Canova, the Pugilists, the Perseus, with

Medusa's Head. The last is altogether like that at Florence, open to much criticism; but there is life, spirit, and expression in all the three, and these will always strike the greatest number of people more forcibly than the mere recondite merits of sculpture. Cruzante is fine: not the mere antique, like * * * The whole left side is beautiful, and fully exposed, according to the laws of the combat, the left hand being on the head, and the right thrown behind the body. Standing a little behind the left leg, which is advanced, and looking up the body along the finely undulating vertebral line, the statue has the grandest effect. All this appears very chaste, and yet very striking. Damasseno, his antagonist, is another sort of figure; more brawny, less animally heroic, less light, drawing himself up heavily, to thrust his hand brutally through the other. Both these much better than Perseus, who has got mannered Apollo thighs and legs, even to sandals, with a *womany* head. * * * * * * The chamber opposite, turning to the left from the door of entry, contains the Apollo.

This is a reward indeed for Canova. He may come here and feel transported. This is indeed glory: and, on the whole, he is worthy of it. No living artist so much so, take him altogether. Lightness, expression, and air, are the merits of the Apollo; soul, form, and look, all going off together in an air of indignant triumph. Go back again to Canova's Perseus, and you will see at once the imitation, and the (not failure) but inferiority. It is heavier in mien, though more flimsy in form and character. In the part of the portico leading to the chamber on the right, in the farther corner of the court, is a Venus and Cupid, larger than life. The lady, of course, as Venus usually is, not covered; and this is a portrait of Sallustia Barbia Orbiana, wife of Alexander Severus. She is quite a Roman lady; but this fashion of portrait strikes us as strange. The chamber contains the *Mercury*, says the catalogue, formerly Antinous or Meleager. * * * *

Going over to the chamber in the other corner, one finds a tomb, with a Cleopatra. She is in the repose of death, with the asp about her arm.

The Laocoon in this last chamber of the four, is the finest probably of all, and the most awful work of man. Compare it with the Niobe of Florence. The best place for catching the expression of the head of the father is the seat immediately opposite to the groupe, at the extremity of the chamber. It is there that you see the last excess of the pain, the misery, the tension of feature. As to saying that paternal sympathy is evidently seen mingling with the torment of the man, it is a refinement that I cannot pretend to, and probably the sculptor could not. All that can be said is, that his poor children are there, one falling towards him in death, the other in *its* approach, and *his* agony, extending his hand towards him while dying; the other in its approach and his agony extending his hand to him for succour; and that, in the head of the unhappy parent, there is nothing lowly, selfish, or vulgar in agony, so that, without any direct indication of parental sentiment, we may conceive, that were he alone, the impression might be otherwise than it is, and that the feeling of the father

influences it, though that feeling be not expressed.

Passing into the *stanza degli animali*, one is more than ever struck by the magnificence of the place prepared for these wonders, and by its superiority to all others. The floor is a beautiful mosaic. The objects are highly interesting. Although often wrong in their animals when they use them as accessions, the ancients are often wonderfully right when they introduce them as principals. * * * The horror in the horse seized by the lion, is quite affecting: a noble animal, helpless, lost, and sensible of his fate; even his face has a look of paleness about it. All the blood is gone and has fallen back into the heart; the nerves and muscles alone are acting.

On the right is the entrance into the gallery, particularly so called. From a recess, the view over the country in the neighbourhood of Rome, and mount Soracte, is beautiful. Branching off from this is an exquisite chamber, called "*Stanza delle Maschere.*" A fine antique mosaic is in the centre of the floor, from which the room takes its name of *Maschere*, as the four

compartments represents masks. Through a fine bronze gilt gate, you look out on a terrace. The floor is marble; the walls are porphyry; the statues are in elegant niches. The Fawn, in *rosso antico*, is here; the crouching Venus; the Ganymede with the eagle; Paris with the apple, &c. A Bacchante, with a light drapery over her form, is beautiful.

The *Sala delle Muse* is in front of that of the animals. It has a beautiful floor, with figures in antique mosaic. The muses are ranged round the pentagon.

The *Sala Rotonda* is still more magnificent than those above mentioned. The roof rises into a noble cupola like the Pantheon. Round its circumference there are grand niches, with each a statue or groupe larger than life. Almost the whole of the floor consists of a magnificent antique mosaic, spreading out its exquisite colour. In the middle, there is a great basin of porphyry, in which a large boat might float.

The *Sala à Croce Greca*, in point of architectural effect, is better than all the rest. It has a high vaulted roof; the walls are of a pure white; in the middle of the floor,

there is a very exquisite ancient mosaic; from this hall there is a fine marble staircase, and two others of very grand effect, which lead up to the Stanza della Biga, containing the famous antique car of white marble. The horses are kept together by a serpent with a head over each back. The pole is terminated by a ram's head. Only one of the horses is antique. A remark, which applies generally, may be made on the excessive cleanliness of the place, its pure whiteness, and the grand order in which it is kept. Paris, like London, looked black: *Rome* is the place; it is a real museum; all grand; all silent; all clear, lucid, holy.

From the Sala della Biga you go down into a long gallery, the optical effect of which, from the top of the flight of marble steps that terminate the museum on the side of the Biga, is that of infinity itself. There is no end to it; and a man's figure far down, crossing its diminishing narrowness, seems the shadow of a pigmy.

* * * *

To the gallery of maps succeed the cham-

bers with the famous tapestries from cartoons by Raphael, the greatest and finest part of which set we have in England. Curiosity is almost wearied with wandering through these rooms, all filled with glory.

* * * * *

On the road to Ancona, I had a conversation with a Franciscan friar. He was not aware that Protestants believe in Jesus Christ; and he asked if we were baptized. He gave me to understand that I must go to hell. "There will be but two places of reception," he said, "when the world is ended — heaven and hell; and I know that the former can be claimed only by Catholics."

At a small village on the road, I saw people playing violins and hurdy-gurdies; having asked what this meant, I was told that they were playing for the souls in purgatory, and that they got *money, cheese,* &c. for their reward.

The drivers of the vetturinos are always religious; they never eat meat on Fridays and Saturdays.

* * * *

ANCONA.

20th May. — THE weather is sultry, yet snow is seen on the Appenines.

* * * *

The monks on the road between Rimini and Ravenna, told me a long story of a miracle; and added, "but this is authenticated." * * * * No joke on their religion takes, for they are not sensible of it. They regard Protestants as heathens.

* * * *

The expense of horse, and man on the outside, according to what I gathered from the vetturino, who brought me from Sinigaglia to Bologna, is one scudo per diem. A horse and carriage such as theirs, he said, might be bought for 110 scudi. The two horses, which the Italian family from

Sienna drove, cost, with the eating of the the two servants, 22 or 23 paoli per diem.

* * * *

NOTE. — *From the remaining memoranda, it appears that Mr. Scott went to Lausanne, and from thence returned by Pontarlier, Auxerre, Sens, and Melun, to Paris.*

AN

ESSAY

ON

FRENCH LITERATURE.

THE state of the literature of France, from the year 1789 to the present period, offers a very interesting subject for observation and inquiry. It is affirmed by the French journals of the time, that Paris contained, just before the breaking out of the Revolution, *twenty thousand* men of letters; by which they mean *authors* — persons who had furnished their quotas to the mass of enlightened sentiment, which was then collected by the nation! I have recently seen a list of the elections of the deputies sent by the French capital to represent it in the various revolutionary legislative bodies: from this document it appears, that, of twenty-four individuals, which was the

number returned by Paris, to the famous convention, *ten* were "artistes, savans, ou gens de lettres!" Among this respectable party, there also figured three *comedians*, — making, with the authors and artists, thirteen of the twenty-four! In recapitulating the totals of the elections for the department of the Seine, from the beginning of the Revolution to the year 8, the number elected seems to be 160 deputies; of these I find forty-two (upwards of a fourth) described as "savans, artistes, gens de lettres, et propriétaires." I have not the means of knowing the proportion which the last-mentioned subdivision (propriétaires) bore to the others; nor is it possible for an English writer to divine the reason why the propriétaires are included with the gens de lettres; but the various statements render it clear, that the men of letters in the department of the Seine possessed a share in the national representation, far surpassing, in numerical strength, any other class whatever, except the lawyers; and, indeed, on a second inspection, it appears that the literary class, with this one exception, outnumbers all the others;

such as "financiers, cultivateurs, commerçans, administrateurs," put together!

Twenty thousand authors, in a capital of 600,000 souls! Nearly forty amongst 160 deputies! One person was to be found in every thirty passing along the street, who was accustomed to show himself in print; and in the legislative assemblies almost one in four! Voltaire says of himself, alluding to the quantity of his works, that it is difficult for a writer to travel with so much baggage so far as posterity: on the same principle it may be averred, that, with so many conductors, it would be difficult to arrive at truth. It will, however, be no longer considered astonishing, that the most momentous questions, which, from the oldest times, have exercised and baffled the strongest understandings, were, at the period alluded to, fully and finally settled in the course of a forenoon's discussion; and the decision brought into practical operation by the afternoon's decree. With such a galaxy of authors, who could imagine himself unenlightened? Mr. Windham said pleasantly, but perhaps a little unsuitably, when the enthusiasm of the volunteering

service existed in this country, that he was afraid to throw a nut-shell out of a window lest he should wound the military honour of a colonel: something like this might have been said in France, with equal point, and more propriety, of poets and philosophers during the early part of the Revolution. In those intellectual days, the nervous eagerness, and feverish vanity, of pamphleteers and journalists, acted immediately, without intervention of any kind, on all the great affairs of the nation; they were brought into close contact with the very first movements of politics. To the irritations, the jealousies, the self-conceit of this race, proverbially notorious for all these qualities, were committed the treatment and the lives of, perhaps, the most deplorable victims of human wickedness and cruelty that have ever existed, — the monarch of France, his queen, and his family.

How this extraordinary condition of things connects itself with the peculiar character of the French literature that just preceded the Revolution; and how, at the end of the short and furious course of republicanism, it naturally settled into that

stagnant state of letters which forms one of the chief features of the usurpation that followed, it would be both curious and instructive to trace. The task of doing this is most worthy of the ambition of the philosophical historian; and would give honourable and promising employment to the efforts of his talents and industry. It would also be highly interesting and useful to institute a strict inquest on the intellectual merits of the literature of France, during the revolutionary period, by summoning to examination the particular authors, and their works, that are still distinguishable among the herd. But, perhaps, chiefly would it abound with amusement and admonition, to pass under close review the orators and authors whose genius found encouragement and scope under the splendour of the Imperial *dynasty*, as I recollect it was called. We were then invited to admire the triumphs of emancipated intellect and expanded knowledge: there are some who now call upon us to join in bewailing their overthrow and disgrace. Two great parties in this country have conspicuously and strenuously wrestled with each

other on the import of the floating history of those remarkable times; for as Flanders was called the fighting-stage, England may be termed the debating-room, of Europe.

M. Chenier, in his "Historical Picture of the State and Progress of French Literature," has undertaken to lead us throughout the greater part of this interesting course; and has pledged himself in his very title-page, to throw a light on the various objects of curiosity to which we have alluded. He proves, however, to be but an insufficient guide to what we should deem the most interesting points of the inquiry, — the state and progress of French literature, from the memorable era at which he commences. It is not that his work is destitute of indications of talent: on the contrary, its writer must have been a person of a sharp and shrewd spirit, and certainly not very apt to be misled by enthusiasm either of feeling or fancy. He appears to have looked at things with a keen but common eye: his tact seems naturally coarse; but it had been well-enough trained to dexterity by literary intercourse, and the routine of the Institute. There are apparent, in his style, certain qualities of brisk-

ness, fluency, and self-content, which give it what the French term precision and clearness. Of this kind of writing, they are very fond; and they manage it in general very well. It bears, with its merits, however, an air of poverty and of flippancy which is not pleasant to an English taste. Burke described it exactly when he gave the character of Mr. Townshend in the House of Commons. He spoke of the manner of that statesman as one of considerable convenience to him in his station; carrying the attention of his hearers lightly and currently over the whole extent of a subject; but owing its ease to a want of earnestness; and the want of earnestness he was inclined to trace to a deficiency of heart.

As a catalogue of writers and works, scrupulously full in its enumerations, with an addition of a certain portion of neat general writing on the subject and manner of each, M. Chenier's book may be useful to those who desire a direction to names and titles: but, although there are several instances of pointed severity, and one or two of eloquent encomium, in the work, it is, as a whole, and with respect to all principal

purposes and qualities, uninforming and unimpressive. His authors are made to pass before the reader's eye, one by one, in a tame succession, like the early Assyrian kings, as has been said, whom it is impossible to know one from the other; and who are continued in a series that seems endless, without offering a single variety. M. Chenier musters all his personages in a long line, on the fore-ground; and a bewildering equality of appearance prevails over the whole display. We are told that this style of criticism is due to "French urbanity;" and it was, no doubt, thought due to some other quality, equally national, to pronounce, in authoritative language, as the candid and matured judgment of a person whose competence and impartiality are not to be suspected, that "French literature, in spite of its numerous losses, and notwithstanding the slanders of envious ignorance, still remains *the first literature of Europe*."

I suspect it would not be very easy to procure from any Frenchman, of any time, any other sort of opinion, in regard to any single accomplishment, virtue, or attain-

ment, that might be named. But, as it is to little purpose to parry one assertion with another, I shall not molest by a contradiction this boast, which, to say the least of it, M. Chenier's book does not sustain. His Tableau of the first literature of Europe is a picture without any kind of perspective; without principal figures, or even prominent groups. One does not know where to look in it for the brightest ornaments of this pre-eminent literature; it furnishes no scale of comparative merit, unless we take the alphabetic order of the author's names. Sismondi, the historian of the Italian republics, must be found out as he stands jammed between two translators; the first of whom, we are told, has preserved himself anonymous; but he merits "remercimens et louanges;" and so does M. Sismondi also, for he has rendered "un véritable service à notre littérature."

In poetry, however, the reader will expect the degrees to be more marked; for distinguished eminence, in this class of composition, must, of course, be found in the first literature of Europe; and I apprehend, that, not even in France, can there

have been so many truly eminent poets, within the last twenty-five years, as to render it useless to make an attempt to confer priority of place on some few individuals. M. Chenier proceeds, in the most legitimate manner, by noticing the various poetic species in their order of rank, commencing with the "heroic epic." This he describes as "eminent and sublime, being consecrated to the celebration of men who make the destiny of nations." He does not, however, in following up this solemn note of preparation, render me ashamed of the forebodings which, I confess, the very name of *epic* excited within me, in consequence of the extreme lateness of the day for this sort of celebration, and of thinking, perhaps, of the indifferent success of Voltaire's "Henriade." It is ominous to find, that his list commences with an "estimable but defective *attempt*," the "Helvetians." The poem in question appears to have been the production of a young man, who died prematurely. M. Masson, it is to be observed, "was attached to the military service of Russia from his youth, but quitted it, in a manner the most honourable, when the Em-

peror Paul declared war against France," M. Chenier traces the faults of the poem to its having been composed in Petersburg, instead of in Paris. From this unsuccessful attempt, the reader is lowered instantly to certain *hopes*: they are high ones, to be sure; but still they are only hopes. M. de Fontanes ("qui brille aujourd'hui comme orateur, à la tête du corps legislatif") gives "hautes espérances" of what he is *about to do* as an epic poet! It appears that he has, on various occasions, read to the Institute certain promising morsels of a piece, which is hereafter to be named, when it is completed, "De la Grèce Sauvée;" and, "*it is to be presumed*," says M. Chenier, "that M. de Fontanes will be more successful than the English poet, Glover, in his "Leonidas."

With this presumptive triumph over the English poet, achieved by a celebrated nonentity, which is no doubt regarded in France as worthy of "the first literature of Europe," the reader is rather suddenly turned out of the epic altogether; or, indeed, it may be said, before he well knew he was in it. He must pass to the *heroi-comic*; and here, says M. Chenier, with exultation,

"we are not constrained to confine ourselves to hopes!" "Whatever may have been the genius of Ariosto," he adds; "Voltaire has at least proved himself his equal;" and a "Mr. Parney is worthy of being cited after these models." The worthiness of being cited *after* is a very equivocal sort of worth; but it is soon clear that genuine praise is intended, for there is a good deal thrown out against that "pious zeal, which becomes unjust;" and the "envy which takes the mask of religious hypocrisy." It is, therefore, evident, that M. Parney's comic-heroic poem, entitled "La Guerre des Dieux," is of that peculiar sort, in the abundance and merits of which the literature of France is certainly richer than that of any other nation.

M. Chenier then describes a poem bearing the interesting title of "La Napliade;" and having for subject the conquest of Naples by Charles VIII. Its personages are the Chevalier Bayard, the Count Vendome, Alexander VI. and "his terrible nephew, Cæsar Borgia." This group seems very promising; but M. Chenier does not say that the poem is a good one; indeed he rather

intimates that it is bad; "but most things," he suggests, "may be seen in different lights;" "it is not destitute of merit," which is only saying it is written by a Frenchman; yet "one cannot but wish for more poetry in the style, more sustained versification, and a lighter pleasantry." The author, it seems, has left a good deal to be wished for; but the *notes* are excellent; "they come from a pen instructed, and, what is better, enlightened;" and, "such as it is, the poem "*would figure in any literature less rich than ours!*" This last touch may seem to some incredible; but I assure the reader that I quote with literal exactness.

Amongst the numerous translations which would seem to make up the great body of the first literature in Europe, in its most elegant branches, there is one of Ossian; "a bard whom some English and German writers," says M. Chenier, "place in the same line with Homer." It is scarcely necessary to observe, that if this is intended to represent what can be fairly termed the opinion in our country, relative to Ossian, it is a gross mis-statement. One hears more

of the beauties of Ossian in France than in England, or even in Scotland now. In fact, the French have been remarkably fond of this work; it is to be seen in all their booksellers' shops, and even on all their stalls: we have heard something of its being a favourite with Buonaparte; and it is sure to be mentioned in the course of the first ten minutes' conversation, held with any Frenchman on the literature of Britain. All Englishmen are aware how completely and finally the pretensions of Macpherson's compilation have been reduced with us; and, as there will be allusions in this Essay to that great genius, whom the progress of time, and the union of testimony, have established on the very pinnacle of honour in our country, I am anxious to throw off an imputation, which, if just, would show that the evidence given by ourselves, as a nation, on the value of our own productions, is totally unworthy of credit, being offered in the idleness of a national vanity which possesses neither the power of discrimination nor the sense of decency.

In the course of his work, M. Chenier has, as we all know, to enumerate writers of

very considerable claims. M. Delille is one of these; but what I complain of is, that there is no bringing this author to any test in respect of his boast as to the general superiority of present French literature, by what he says in describing its particulars. As he assigns no chief rank, English critics cannot adjust with him the reasonableness of his pretensions. Should they agree, for instance, with what he says in favour of Delille, yet be inclined to deny that the merits of this writer can confer the reputation of superiority on French poetry, they are not at all approaching to an issue. Were they to justify and establish their dissent, they would have done nothing; for they might immediately be referred, with an arrogant air, to some fragment read at some of the sittings of the Institute. In short, M. Chenier takes special care not to commit the triumph of his country's letters to the fate of any particular personal reputations; nay, it is independent, on his own showing, of any thing actually accomplished; it is moreover lustrous in avowed failure. The same baffling vagueness characterizes his judgments throughout all the chapters of his work; and it is really

appalling to observe, how, when he approaches towards a point where the division of moral right and wrong is strongly marked, he totally declines intimating an opinion whether his author has followed the right hand or the left hand road. All the considerations, therefore, that chiefly connect themselves with the interests of society, and the dignity of personal character in literature, M. Chenier leaves totally out of the question, in a Review which is to show the universal excellence of the French writers! He commences by declaring, that he means to avoid all *delicate* questions. Whether the work he notices be offensively blasphemous, or boldly philosophical, he will not decide; for "he tasks himself not to forget the extreme circumspection which certain matters exact." When the merit of a metaphysical volume is in question, he excuses himself from following up its argument, "as that would be to get into questions, from which the Academies have agreed to abstain." Treating of the labours of an historian, he says, "the sentiments which M. Segur manifests, and the judgments which he conveys, are susceptible of

a long discussion: but this would be here out of place, and the matter being as delicate as it is important, we feel ourselves obliged equally to decline eulogy and blame."

In a critical point of view it would answer no good purpose whatever to wade through the contents of a work, which is thus loose and slippery, to the extreme of being utterly intangible on all points that are capable of receiving something like a fair trial and decision, and which is at the same time in the highest degree confident and peremptory, wherever the dispute would reduce itself to a mere clashing of brass against brass. I readily avow that it is for a very different purpose that I have entered into an examination of M. Chenier's book; and I am disposed, without further preamble, to proceed to the principal business of the present Essay. There are, however, one or two remarks, suggested by the facts that have already fallen under observation, which I am anxious previously to make.

When we consider to what a degree the literature of England is rendered picturesque and imposing by talent and character, — by

the boldness of genius, and the free and even luxuriant indulgence of those peculiar impulses that distinguish one individual from another, it is impossible not to feel that we are looking down, when we turn from it to the tame equality of M. Chenier's Tableau. I will not follow his example, by asserting the absolute superiority of our authors; but the names of Wordsworth, of Scott, of Campbell, and of Byron, suggest in the single class of poetry, so much diversified richness of talent, so many interesting points of essential and comparative inquiry, such irresistible invitations to refer to the great principles of literary excellence, in their origin in the human heart, to trace the different modes by which the energy of passion expresses itself, and how it becomes united to the workings of the imagination; names, in short, that force upon one's recollection so many matters falling within the plan of a treatise on the literature of a nation, none of which M. Chenier has touched upon, that, I confess, I should accuse myself of doing him an injustice, were I not to impute a certain proportion of his deficiencies to the intrinsic poverty of

his subject. This, I feel confident, I ought to do; but there are other principal reasons to be given for that crippled, dwarfed, and mean character, which his book bears.

One of these is, that the brutalities and extravagancies of the Revolution had disposed the mass of the French public to cherish a sottish lethargy on all points of intellectual or moral inquiry; and had left the greater number of the persons, who acted conspicuously during those outrages, in a state of discredited character, and disgusted temper, which made them at once ashamed, afraid, and unwilling, to manifest any thing like a desire of again assuming the direction of men's minds. Of this hideous state of wreck, weakness, and destitution, an individual had taken advantage to lead the victims of their own folly into the most abject state of thraldom; and this affords us substantial reasons for people being inclined to say too little rather than too much. Of the actual weight of this iron rod some idea may be formed from what I am about to state. M. Jay, a clever writer in newspapers and periodical

works, who is well known to belong to the party that calls itself, by distinction, *liberal*, in France, recently reviewed M. Chenier's work in the "Mercure." In the course of the review, he goes out of his way to pay the author of the "Tableau" a compliment for *daring* to mix some praise with some blame of Madame de Stael's novels, at a time when that lady was wandering in Europe under the ban of the imperial tyranny! The reviewer particularly notices the circumstance, he says, because such conduct was rare, and required *courage* as well as impartiality. It almost stifles one to think of the state of oppression and servility, which is indicated by this casual and apparently unconscious notice. As to the contrast suggested by the present political institutions, I need only to mention, that M. Jay delivered himself, but a few days ago, without scruple, to an animated eulogium, on the literary talents and private worth of M. Chenier, of whom it has been asserted that he was one of the men who voted the death of Louis XVI.

Included in the volume with M. Chenier's "Tableau," there is a Report on the Merits

of La Harpe's "Lycée." This Report was published by the Class of French literature in the Institute, to make known the grounds on which it had decided that the grand prize should be awarded to the "Lycée," instead of to "L'Examen Critique des Historiens d'Alexandre," par M. de Sainte Croix. The prize was announced to be destined for the work, "which should unite, in the highest degree, originality of idea, talent of composition, and elegance of style."*

* Lacretelle says, that these decenniary prizes, which were founded by Buonaparte, and "which made a noise in Europe, but had no effect in France, displayed perhaps better than any thing else, the collision of the opposite impulsions, influencing that fantastical tyrant to attempt the system of universal servitude which it was given to him to push so far." Lacretelle states, that, when he made himself Emperor, he wished to play the parts of Alexander, Augustus, and Louis XIV. To promote this design he imagined these decenniary prizes, to be distributed from his triumphant hand, surrounded by the gorgeous apparel of a domination without bounds — forming a scene "where *Oriental* pomp should cover the *Teutonic* reality of his power, and he might appear as a Nebuchadnezzar grafted on an Attila. Here the imperial charlatan played his game, but it clashed with that of the military despot." The consequence was, says M. Lacretelle, that he did with the decenniary prizes what he often did with the other *Constitutions of the Empire*, "from whence he wandered as he pleased, because they

The class states itself to have seen, with surprise, the verdict of the jury of its members, which gave this reward to the publication of M. de Ste Croix. Having resolved to distinguish La Harpe's, it entrusted to M. Chenier the drawing up of the memoir necessary to justify this proceeding. Inasmuch as La Harpe and he had been enemies, the selection did credit to M. Chenier's reputation for self-command and impartiality. The Report is well done; and certainly it is not unfairly severe on the "Lycée." Neither is it an unmeaning eulogium; the imperfections of the work, as far as they could be discerned by the Reporter, are smartly reflected upon, and the qualities which appeared to the Institute to have merited the prize are neatly displayed. This part of M. Chenier's work contains more of real meaning than its main division. In running over the critical opinions of La Harpe, M. Chenier conforms, in every point, to the dogmas, and

never were but the *jerks* of a head more fixed to one end than to one plan. * * * In fine, he retracted as a folly one of his *grand thoughts*. * * * His last tactic on this point was to pay literary prostitution at a handsome rate."

enforces with zeal the all-sufficient character of that *System of Principles*, on which the French have not only founded their literature, but also claimed for it that all other nations should acknowledge its superiority. It therefore affords an opportunity of examining those principles to some extent; and, I confess, I have been very anxious to join my efforts to what others have done in directing attention to the fundamental errors of this celebrated code of criticism, which has stood firm amidst the destruction of much better codes; and which is still as deeply rooted in France as it was in the times of Racine and Voltaire. I shall proceed then, without further ceremony, to consider it in its various features; alluding to some of the opinions delivered by certain of its most notorious supporters; and strengthening myself on the points, as I go along, by respectable authorities on my side.

The circumstance which first strikes me as remarkable, is, that, according to the testimony of those French critics who take the highest tone in asserting the superiority of their country's literature over that of all

other countries, ancient and modern, France came the latest into the field, where she has, if they are to be believed, ultimately surpassed all competition. She, who was destined to take the lead of all, remained, up to very recent times, behind all other nations. La Harpe runs over the literature of the Spaniards, the Italians, and the English, from the earliest modern ages, to that which in France they term the *age* of Richelieu and the French Academy. "It is proper," he says, "that we should finish with France; for she long continued inferior to other nations in every species of composition, though in many she has since outstripped all who preceded her." Barbarous as Lope de Vega and Shakspeare are accounted by the critic in question, he, nevertheless, states, that the dramas of these very rude writers as far surpass the French productions of that period, as both have since been surpassed by Corneille and Racine.

It may please the admirers of La Harpe, among his countrymen, to find his testimony supported by other evidence. An inquirer into the early history of Eu-

rope, mentions, on the authority of French scholars, that, "the English monarchs were the most liberal and perhaps the earliest patrons of French poetry." He says, "We are told by a correct and diligent antiquary, M. de la Rue Royale, Professor of History in the University of Caen, that it was from England and Normandy that the French received the first works which deserve to be cited in their language."—Ellis's Specimens of the Early English Poets, vol. i. p. 40.

It is true, the French critics hold in very low estimation the primitive productions of European literature; and their disdain saves them from feeling mortified, that their country cannot boast of a rivalship with Dante, Chaucer, Boccacio, Ariosto, Petrarch, Spenser, Shakspeare, and Cervantes. The affection and veneration which the names of these early writers excite in the breasts of the people of various nations, connected as their productions are with the fountain-heads of national character, and constituting a valuable part of the recorded honours on which their countries respectively pride themselves, are set down by

the French, without scruple or doubt, to gross ignorance or bigoted obstinacy. They ask for the "*langage poli*," and not finding it, according to the standard of the anti-chamber, much before the age of Louis Quatorze, they are contented to limit the pride of their own literary pedigree by this very modern date. Furthermore, they would regulate the literary honours of all others by the degree in which they have imitated and rivalled that "full-dressed and formal beauty," as it has been termed, that unyielding punctilio and indiscriminate parade, which courts and academies, under the influence of their natural instincts, have enforced on mankind, as constituting the model of grandeur and elegance. Within this truly grovelling and narrow range, the French see all that is sublime and enlarged: whatever falls without it, they proscribe as mean, coarse, or ignorant. A writer on their stage has remarked, of one of their first authors, that he often conceals what is in reality hard, base, and low, under forms of politeness and courtesy. The French will deny the fact; and the whole value of their own denial is theirs by right; but it

might be useful to them, if they could be set upon considering a circumstance, the lesson of which is applicable to manners as well as to literature — namely, how very frequently we find an intimate connection existing between the forms of politeness and courtesy, and the essentials of what is hard, base, and low.

La Harpe, imitating Voltaire, is full of contemptuous allusions to the barbarities and imperfections of the early writers. Dante, he says, occasions "l'ennui mortel," which renders it impossible for a reader to follow his rude and absurd rhapsody: Don Quixote is inferior to Gil Blas: the Portuguese Camoens "had in truth very little invention:" the plays of the Spaniards, Lope de Vega and Calderon, "are deficient in every merit which art teaches, and good sense prescribes:" Shakspeare is, on many occasions, described as "gross," "coarse," and "disgusting." The Frenchman, admits, indeed, that Shakspeare had "un talent naturel," by the force of which he was "quelquefois élevé au sublime;" but he adds, that these passages are rendered more striking "by their being so rare," and

mingled "with so much base alloy;" and that, "since the appearance of men of the first order of genius under Louis Quatorze, it can only be national prejudice that affects to consider, as a master, in the first of arts cultivated by enlightened nations, an author who merely contrasted some sparks of genius with the darkness of his country's barbarity, and of his own general style." Even Milton, according to the opinion of the late lecturer at the Parisian Lycée, "*passé les premiers chants* of the Paradise Lost, can scarcely be read by any person of taste."

To do nothing was better than to do so; hence a Frenchman is the first to mention his country's intellectual poverty and obscurity, in the age of Bacon, of Michael Angelo, and Raphael, because, in his opinion, that was a barbarous and an ignorant age. As yet the French Academy was not; but enlightened times approached: that admirable body was established by the minister Richelieu to withdraw people's attention from politics; and at length, under Louis XIV., burst upon us, in the words of the enraptured Frenchman, "cette éclatante lumière qui a rempli le monde!"

Mr. Schlegel, in his able work on Dramatic Literature, particularly notices the contempt with which the French treat their own early writers, as well as those of other nations. "We may leave," he says, "to themselves the task of depreciating the antiquities of their own literature, which they do with the mere view of adding to the glory of the age of Richelieu and Louis XIV." Then commenced, say they, "the grandeur and regularity of sustained diction." They confess, with a smile of pity, that before this fine period, their authors made kings, queens, and princes talk, "comme mon voisin, et mes voisines, que j'ai laissés à la maison:" but at length they attained to what La Harpe emphatically calls "the art" of writing, constituted of "tous les convenances, et tous les rapports." Richelieu, to withdraw the public attention from his nefarious political designs, as their own writers state, gave them the Academy, and Louis XIV. gave them Versailles, and all that appertained thereunto. Of course, the muse could not do less, under such circumstances, than put on her court-dress, and we find her immediately up to the ears

in brocade, and sailing along in a hoop-petticoat. She now breathed only "the agreeable illusion," and was made up of the "*tout artificiel*," of which the well-connected and "*assorted parts do not present real nature, for she is always near us, and we have not need of art to find her.*" La Harpe, vol. iv. p. 168, &c.

"Every man who thinks," says Voltaire, "and what is more rare, every man of taste, reckons only four ages in the history of the world." The first he calls "the age of Philip and Alexander, or that of Pericles, Demosthenes, Aristotle, Plato, Apelles, and Phidias." The second is that of "Cæsar and Augustus." The third followed "the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet II." when the Medici encouraged learning and taste in Italy. The fourth "is that which is named the age of Louis XIV.; and it is, perhaps, *of the four, the one that approaches the nearest to perfection.*" The rising of this glory he dates from, and ascribes to, the establishment of the Academy; the happy influence of which institution, he says, extended even "to England, where it excited an emulation," of which, he is of opinion,

we had great need. We are disposed to admit that the influence of French modes did, about this time, extend to our country, and we know how to appreciate its value. If we did not, Voltaire would help us to a proper conclusion. He says, the plays of Shakspeare, though "good enough for his day," were not ".d'une tragique assez noble du temps des Lords Carteret, Chesterfield, et Littleton." he quotes Marmontel, who congratulates the English nation upon daily reducing and altering the works of "Shakspeare that had possession of the theatre," and compliments *Garrick*, in particular, for having almost clipped him from the stage! We must not allow ourselves to be piqued at having the improvement of our wit and taste referred by Voltaire to the French Academy; for we find him conceding that France remained in a state of barbarism until it appeared. "Avant le siècle que j'appelle de Louis Quatorze, et qui commence à-peu-près à l'établissement de l'Académie Française, les Italiens appelaient tous les ultra-montagnes du nom de Barbares: il faut avouer que les Français meritaient en quelque sorte cette injure."

This is very extraordinary, considering how late the Academy came into the world. An historian of their various political revolutions exclaims; "Qui pourait ne pas déplorer cet état d'un peuple, qu'on détache de tous ses temps passés, pour concentrer toutes ses affections, toutes ses pensées, sur le temps present!" As we shall, in the sequel, return upon the various facts we have established, we must not give way just now to the temptation of enlarging upon this singular trait. We shall only permit ourselves to impress upon attention, that it is quite *peculiar*. The French are, in this respect, a contradiction to all other nations. All people, ancient and modern, but themselves, have looked back fondly upon their early literature, and early writers. These, to all people but the French, have furnished an authority in their examples, and a delight and a pride in the traditions of their names and histories. Without asserting that every old production must be excellent, we may affirm that there is a certain class of excellence which belongs almost exclusively to the primitive character. This class is not only one of the

highest in itself, but its appeal goes directly to the superior qualities of the soul, and makes the largest demands upon the opulence of the imagination. A prevailing disrelish of early native genius, indicates that the public taste is of an inferior and false kind: that it has either had but scanty opportunities of acquiring a relish for the best things, or, through weakness or seduction, has been turned from enjoying them. "Notre antiquité n'est rien pour notre admiration," says a Frenchman; he accuses his countrymen of even being inclined to fix the commencement of their genealogy, as a people, to the reign of Louis XIV.! This feature of character is a decisive one, and it has had its influence on other matters besides their criticisms.

I would take leave to mention, though it may seem impertinent in me to have a better opinion of the French authors than is entertained of them in their own country, that I can by no means agree that their early literature is so imperfect as they represent. When Voltaire says that Swift has "*perfectioned*" Rabelais, he is not, to be sure, quite so far wrong as when he

says that Shakspeare's plays are not noble enough for the taste and acquirements of Lord Chesterfield; but he is far from being right. Rabelais is himself such as he is, all complete of his kind. He offers his work; "non comme bon, mais comme sien." His character is distinct, decided, and not to be dressed into what a Frenchman calls perfection. Swift was not his equal; and if he had been his superior, he could not "have perfectioned" Rabelais. I use the gallicism, for the word is too unmeaning to be translated into English. A mechanical art may be forwarded on the road to perfection, and so may a science; but how one man's genius is to be rendered perfect by another I cannot comprehend. The most of those who are said to have done this, are mere copyists, necessarily inferior to their models; though I do not mean to intimate that Swift servilely copied Rabelais. When Voltaire affirms that "a certain naïveté forms the *sole* merit of Joinville, Amiot, Marot, Montaigne, Regnier, and the Satires of Menippus," I doubt the justice of his judgment in regard to all of these earlier French writers, because we

are sure it is unjust in regard to some. The language of Amiot, in his translation of Daphnis and Chloe, put side by side with that which has been given by a more modern hand, will show how much the process of academical refinement has faced down all marked phraseology and masculine turn of expression. This, even as foreigners, we Englishmen may venture to maintain, because we have perceived the merit we praise: the counterbalancing advantages for its loss, very possibly because we are foreigners, we have never been able to discover. As for Montaigne, it evinces an utter want of feeling for the acuteness of his observation and the inimitable charms of his manner, to sum them all up in the hacknied word 'naiveté,' which has been used in behalf of all sorts of persons and characters, from milk-maids to princesses, till its meaning, like that of most of their words that would have remained striking, if sparingly and fitly applied, is utterly worn out. The fact is, that the illuminated saloon of Louis Quatorze at Versailles so dazzles the eyes of these French critics, that they are blind

to the stars which shine brightly in their open sky.

It seems to be a constitutional weakness in the French character, to pamper itself with one or other false notion of the refined, the splendid, and the elegant, which has two unfortunate effects, that of leaving them at the mercy of crafty and interested imposition; and of rendering them at the same time ridiculously confident that they are at the very climax of discernment and taste.

The national mind has not a principle of strength and truth within itself sufficient to detect the tricks of such men as Richelieu and Buonaparte, when they seek to degrade the public condition and character by putting in the mouths of the people some splendid theme or flattering boast, where the names of refinement, talent, and beauty, are suggested in dishonesty, and repeated in a foolish ignorance. The multitude, in all countries, are too easily deceived; but there is some security against a general delusion, when each class retains its proper tastes, and is not ashamed to confess them, resisting the miserable affect-

ation of squaring itself by a higher level than its natural one, and choosing to walk firmly on its feet, rather than totter ridiculously on its tiptoes. In France, from a general want of a *sense of suitableness*, any crafty foppery, addressing them from the mountebank stage of an imperial throne, an academical chair, or a juggler's booth, in the name of art, literature, or science, has as many dupes as hearers; and, as the dupes in such cases must also be the judges, we know what decisions to calculate upon. In England, we have religion, politics, and trade, for standing dishes at our common people's tables; but does that argue for the coarseness of the national character, as some of our home-bred calumniators would represent? It simply proves its truth; and our barbarity, in regard to matters of fancy and taste, must be established by citing the nation's productions in this way, and comparing them with those of other countries. I am prepared to maintain, that, be they better or worse, their life and duration are to be traced directly to the qualities of the public character, which it is, therefore, the worst, because the most senseless malignity

to revile, and, at the same time, to express admiration of those fine memorials of exquisite imaginations which have rested secure on the sterling foundation of English fidelity and discernment: whereas, elsewhere, they would have fallen victims to the national levity and ignorance. Honest Christopher Sly stuck manfully to the regalos which suited him best. "If you give me any conserves, give me conserves of *beef*:" yet there was more good, because more *real* taste, in his character than in that of To-pan the tinker, who boasted that his ancestor beat the kettle-drum before Julius Cæsar, when that great conqueror crossed the Thames, at low water-mark, to enslave the island.

It is the national failing above described that has led the French to pride themselves upon having cut off all manly idiom from their language. To it we must trace their self-congratulations upon the lucky idea of making poetry display its dexterity in fetters ("*entraves*,") like the dancing felons in the Beggar's Opera; their claiming fellowship with the Greek drama, to insult that of the English, the Spaniards, and the

Germans, and their picking out some of the chief features of the ancients to decry them as barbarities, which other nations have been gross enough to imitate, but which they have had taste enough to avoid. This inveterate vanity is never interrupted by any of their numerous changes, in its succession from father to son: it has always belonged to them, and it would appear that it always will. In their works it takes the character of one of those eternal principles which nothing can agitate, weaken, or discredit. It may be traced back from the last newspaper published in Paris, through M. Chenier's Tableau, into a countless number of memoirs, tracts, and dissertations. In thus following its course, I find it amusingly displayed by Huet, Bishop of Avranches, who joined Leclerc, the Genevese, against Longinus and Boileau, in maintaining that there is nothing sublime in the account of the creation of light in the book of Genesis. This reverend critic has favoured the world with a History of Romances; and, to show his right to select such a subject, he takes occasion to observe, that the Gothic fabulists are very

coarse; nay, that the early fictions altogether are so rude and unpolished, that they can afford no pleasure to refined and instructed readers. As was to be expected, he proceeds from this to mark, for admiration, "the consummate degree of elegance and art which distinguishes the French Romances" of his time; and he accounts for this by observing that, "the superior refinement and politesse of the *French gallantry* has happily given them the advantage of shining in this species of composition." It might appear unfair to interfere with the good Bishop's enthusiasm for French gallantry; it shone upon him as a thing from which he was forbidden, and, under such circumstances, the imagination is apt to be restive. His philosophical countrymen of the present day will be more inclined than ourselves to treat him with disdain; though they perpetuate his foible, with this difference, that it is now less harmless and more disgusting. We think, however, it will amuse some of our readers to sketch the character of those romances, which M. Huet represents as doing so much honour to his country. They were

the productions of Gomberville, Calprenéde, Des Marais, and Mademoiselle Scuderi, and some of them ran to the length of twelve volumes in thick octavo. The authors took Scipio, Alexander the Great, Pompey, Brutus, Horatius Cocles, &c. and made these grim old warriors enter into an "espèce de vœu, de ne parler jamais, et de n'entendre jamais parler, que d'amour." The two that excited most applause of these, were the Cyrus, and the Clelie of Mademoiselle Scuderi. Artamenes, in her hands, became "more mad than all the Celadons and Sylvanders: from morning to night, he did nothing but lament and groan of his love." Brutus was yet deeper in love than Artamenes; and Horatius Cocles went about singing,

"Et Phenisse même publie
Qu'il n'est rien si beau que Clelie!"

In these "consummately elegant romances," the heroes of the Roman republic debate enigmas and questions in gallantry; and, for the better understanding of the whole, "la Carte du Pays du Tendre," is given with the first part of Clelie. Boileau says,

that, in his youth, he thought these works chef-d'œuvres; and read them with ecstasy.

It may be remarked, however, that these strange productions are not the worst part of French literature. They are chimeras, and profess to be what they are. All their parts are in keeping and consistency, because they avowedly discard truth of imitation. They sometimes display a considerable portion of imagination and sensibility, judiciously enough employed according to the plan of their composition. They cannot fairly be said to misrepresent nature and character, for they do not pretend to represent either the one or the other. This is not the case with the "fine writers," as the French call them. Their surpassing merit is stated by Voltaire to consist in having made "aussi bonnes expériences sur le cœur humain," as the English, "sur la physique." Identity and individuality become, then, in regard to their works, first-rate considerations; yet, I own I know of no higher burlesque in Scuderi or Gomberville, than Racine's lines, which he puts into the mouth of Alexander the Great, addressing a queen of India;

" Mais dans ce même temps, souvenez-vous, Madame,
Que vous me promettiez quelque place en votre âme !"

This is, indeed, "*wafting sighs from the Indus*," and scarcely exceeded by Glumdalca's reply to Queen Dollallolla:

—— " Madam, I am
Your most obedient, and most humble servant !"

The lines quoted from Racine, are, I admit, stated to be unlucky by the French themselves, but they are, strictly speaking, examples, though marked ones, of the peculiarities of that species of writing which forms, what they call, the "*perfectioned style*." This style is distinguished by two circumstances, among others, which I wish at present particularly to note. The first is, that it is strictly and exclusively *French*; though it cannot in the best sense of the word be called *national*: the second is, that it finds welcome and applause in almost all other countries, yet cannot fairly be said to have been *received* by any. Both these observations seem to require some explanation.

Inasmuch as it has been fashioned by themselves, and made up, as they say, of

the "tout artificiel;" inasmuch as it acknowledges the despotic supremacy of French forms and conventions, and allows itself to attempt the beautiful and the natural only as it can be done in entire submission to certain modern ordinances and customs established among themselves, it is wholly French, and nothing but French: while, on the other hand, as it has no depth of root in history, as it has not acquired fulness and vigour in the course of an hereditary transmission through the deep course of time and the varying channels of public events, as, in fact, it has no genealogy, it cannot boast of that ancient and inseparable connection with the manners and records of its country, that would render it worthy to be called *national*. It must not be supposed that the academies and coteries of a time of fashionable refinement and individual vanity, can form a national literature, any more than the clubs of the Palais Royal could give a national political constitution. In regard to the second circumstance I have mentioned, namely, that the French style is welcomed and applauded in all countries, without having been re-

ceived by any, it is to be thus explained. The tastes and feelings that grow up and strengthen themselves in the artificial temperament of genteel society, which look for their gratifications in certain agreements with its rules and laws; these form a class that admits of few or no varieties, and which is spread over the whole of civilized Europe, chiefly by means of its great capitals. Now, "social cultivation," as Schlegel says, "prevails throughout the whole of the French literature and art. This sharpens the sense for the ludicrous, and on that account when it is carried to an over-refinement, it is the death of everything like enthusiasm; for all enthusiasm, all poetry, has a ludicrous effect to the unfeeling." We may easily conceive, then, as he further observes, "Why the French literature, since the age of Louis XIV. has been, and still is, so well received in the upper ranks of society." It has, we see, its proper element throughout all Europe, within those ranks; they form a sphere where manners, and even opinions, are uniform; where character is formed to one pattern; where the judgment, and even the affections, all move in

one orbit, round a central spot of modish authority. It is impossible to imagine that Lord Chesterfield should not be more fond of Racine's Esther than of Shakspeare's Romeo and Juliet. But the French style is not merely imported as an exotic; it always remains one. It is only fit for the hot-house. It never takes root in the soil; it never flourishes in the natural air of the countries to which it has been brought as a luxury for the fashionable world. The reason of this is, that it has no stamina, vigorous enough to establish itself deeply in the character, and that it holds no correspondence with the heart. It is not to French poetry that we can go in solitude, or in sorrow, although it may be found to harmonize with the pensiveness of a summer-house, and to soothe, while it indulges, a fit of the vapours. One who has very profoundly studied the sources of poetical excellence, remarks of Ossian's poems as they are called, that "much as these pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly uninfluential on the literature of the country. No succeeding writer appears to have caught from

them a ray of inspiration. This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the island is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery audacious as worthless." This seems to be very just; and we may ask, Who ever has caught or will catch a ray of inspiration from French poetry? For the reasons already noted, it has, almost every where, been read, praised, and imitated; but where has it spread, strengthened, and fixed? It is the prerogative of natural species to propagate each after its kind, but French literature lives and dies in cold celibacy: it exists but in unproductive examples. It belongs therefore of right to the people that have invented it. They may boast that it has been, from time to time, copied and applauded by Italy, Spain, Germany, and England: it has been almost universally caught, like the contagion of their politics, and been as widely extended as the temporary ascendency of their arms; but wherever it has been received or imposed, it has always remained extrinsic to the national style, and

foreign to the national character; and, sooner or later, it has been thrown off and expelled, by the return of innate energy, like the paroxysm of a disease, or the yoke of a foreign conquest.

The French, however, boast loudly of the universality of the reputation of their poetry: they do not feel the extent of the sacrifices by which this same universality must be purchased; and yet there are several analogies in nature which might help them to some sensibility on this head. Nothing certainly can be more *universal*, in one sense of the word, than the style which makes Alexander the Great echo back into the ears of the young Parisian beauty, seated in a *loge grillé*, the very compliments and intreaties which she found it so difficult to resist in her boudoir, when they were pressed upon her by a kneeling mousquetaire. Shakspeare's Juliet would have no mercy shown her by critics so expert and practised: her mode of receiving Romeo's attentions would be vehemently accused of a want of *tournure*; and we tremble to think how "*les religieuses*" of St. Cyr would have been shocked by the levity of Rosalind, or

the simplicity of Imogen. The French style, on the other hand, is one that reconciles every thing, and pleases every body; nor can there be a better example of its almost miraculous powers in this respect, than the play which Racine wrote for the devout establishment just referred to. I have already named the drama of Esther. Its object was to combine religious edification, and political sarcasms, with royal amours, amusement, and splendour. It was written at the instigation of Madame de Maintenon, the *mistress* of Louis, to be performed in a *convent*, before that monarch and his court, by the scholars of the nuns — *young ladies of the first families in France!* Some rather important incongruities cannot fail to strike the English reader of this description. La Harpe has given an impressive account of these extraordinay representations, which I shall quote; for it conveys the image of a glory, such as it was, that has passed away, and of which "*nothing can bring back the hour.*"

"Qu'on se represente de jeunes personnes, des pensionnaires, que leur age, leur voix, leur figure, leur inexperience même, rendaient interessantes, executant

dans un couvent, une pièce tirée de l'Ecriture Sainte; recitant des vers pleins d'une onction religieuse, pleins de douceur et d'harmonie, qui sembloient rappeler leur propre histoire et celle de leur fondatrice; *qui la peignoient des couleurs les plus touchantes, sous les yeux d'un monarque qui l'adorait, et d'une cour qui etoit à ses pieds;* qui offroient à tous moments les *allusions les plus piquantes, à la flatterie ou à la malignité,* et l'on concevra que cette réunion de circonstances, dans un spectacle qui, par lui-même, n'appelait pas la severité, devait être la chose du monde la plus seduisante."

All this must certainly have been "one of the most seducing things in the world." I do not wonder that Madame de Sevigné, giving an account of these superb spectacles, is impelled to exclaim in the very height of a Frenchwoman's enthusiasm; "Racine a bien de l'esprit!"* One might have condemned one's self to sit by the side of a hoop-peticoat, to have been present at that imposing assemblage of princely grandeur and pleasure, and piety and beauty, and pomp and pageantry, the toute ensemble of which could exist in no other country on

* Le Brun, writing to Voltaire, says, "The bel-esprit wanders from nature, the genius approaches to it." Champefort, in his eulogy of Fontaine, asks pardon for praising "l'esprit" in that author. "Quel homme," he exclaims, "fut jamais plus au dessus de ce que l'on appelle esprit!" Neither le Brun, nor Champefort, seems to have imbibed the spirit of French criticism.

the face of the earth but France. I should willingly have changed my pen for a white-stick, or even a yeoman's halbert, to have seen the devout mistress who established the convent, the monarch, "who adored her," the courtiers "who were at her feet," and (certainly not the least remarkable part of the company), the "*eight Jesuits with Father Gaillard*," who, according to Madame de Sevigné, "honoured the spectable with their presence." But more than all these, more than Madame de Maintenon, or Louis, or the Jesuits, or even than the Père Gaillard himself, do I estimate the "jeunes pensionnaires," on the stage, rendered so interesting by their voice, beauty, and inexperience, and delivering in the gentlest, sweetest accents, to the gorgeous, silent audience, so royal, reverend, military, and gallant, the polished verses of Racine! These verses, full of "*onction religieuse*," and yet carrying with them, we are told, the most "*pointed allusions both flattering and malignant!*". It may be imagined how keenly such allusions would be relished, in the midst of such persons, surrounded by such scenes, and mingled with the solemnity of

scriptural subjects, and the magnificence of elaborate poetry! Esther was intended as a portrait of Madame de Maintenon; and La Harpe asks, if the court could avoid thinking of her predecessor, Madame de Montespan, when Esther thus speaks of Vasthi:

> "Peut-être on t'a conté la fameuse disgrace,
> De l'altière Vasthi, *dont j'occupe la place*,
> Lorsque le Roi, contre elle enflammé de depit,
> La chassa de son trone, ainsi que de *son lit!*"

Allusions so express and particular, so indulgent to the royal vices, and at the same time so rich in all the stimulants of courtly malice and scandal, could not but powerfully recommend a piece, "*tirée de l'Ecriture Sainte*," to ears polite. How far the nuns of St. Cyr acted suitably in permitting their young scholars to occupy their fancies with these allusions, it is no longer interesting to inquire.

Justice requires us to mention, that the French have received from one of their own writers, and what they may be still more proud of, as an illustration of the merits of one of their poets, an excellent description of the qualities which constitute the highest order of the literary character. This de-

scription will be found to expose itself directly to any faithful picture that may be given of the characteristic graces of the fine writers. The passage is so spirited and just, that we gladly incorporate it with these remarks to assist them by its power:

"Il est un espèce de gloire rare dans tous les temps, même dans celui ou les arts commencent à refleurir que chaque homme se saisit de son partage et se saisit de sa place; un attribut inestimable fait pour plaire à tous les hommes par l'impression qu'ils desirent le plus, celle de la nouveauté, C'est ce tour d'esprit particulier qui exclut toute ressemblance avec les autres, qui imprime sa masque à tout ce qu'il produit qui semble tirer tout de lui-meme en donnant une forme nouvelle à tout ce qu'il prend d'autrui: toujours piquant même dans les irregularités, parce que rien ne serait irregulier comme lui; qui peut tout hasarder, parce que tout lui sied; qu'on ne peut imiter parce qu'on n'imite point la grace; qu'on ne peut traduire en aucune langue parce qu'il s'en est fait une qui lui est propre."

This admirable piece of criticism is extracted from Champfort's eulogium on La Fontaine: in it we have all the heart, the truth, and the discrimination which we vainly seek for in Voltaire's various remarks on the same author. In the above quotation may be discovered the impertinence of the system of French rules, the inferiority

of the writers by whom the French set most store, and part of the secret of the fame that attaches itself to those shining names in European literature, which the French peer at through academical spectacles, darkened to a fitness for discovering spots by excluding brilliancy. That "espèce de gloire," which Champfort describes, certainly does not belong to the poetical style of Racine, Corneille, Boileau, Voltaire, nor, most assuredly, to that of the more recent authors of "The Templars," "Germanicus, &c.;" but it belongs of right to La Fontaine and to Montaigne; and if it included the heavenly gift of the poet's imagination, it would be worthy of Dante, of Ariosto, of Shakspeare, Milton, and Spenser.

In considering the merits of the French poets, and of the code of rules to which they are subject, I have taken every opportunity of checking my sentiments by tests of their correctness, the most strict that have presented themselves. If there be any meaning in my opinions, they must connect themselves with something beyond my own assertions; and, in some way, support themselves upon general principles and

admitted facts. It is their carelessness about this, that warrants me in applying the epithet impertinent to certain doctrines of our neighbours. Voltaire, after praising the pure taste, classical accomplishments, and lively genius of Pope, attempts to ridicule an exquisite passage in Hamlet; and, in so doing, exclaims — "*This is the stuff which Mr. Pope thinks fine!*" Any one but a Frenchman would have suspected, that he might, by chance, be wrong in decrying a piece of foreign poetry, which a native critic, of whose general sense, taste, and learning, he had professed the highest notion, regarded as transcendantly sublime and beautiful.

A still more extravagant instance of this incurable and offensive vanity happened to fall under my observation the other day. Frequent allusion has already been made in this Essay, to a German work on Dramatic Literature; and I shall have occasion to support myself by its alliance still more often in the sequel. This work was recently noticed in one of the Paris Reviews. Mr. Schlegel's talent is admitted; his knowledge of his subject is admitted; his

remarks on the ancient theatres are admitted to evince learning, sagacity, and feeling: in his observations on the French theatre *alone*, he is affirmed to be prejudiced, ignorant, and feeble; the Reviewer adds, with that simplicity, which vanity, in its highest degree, will occasion as well as modesty, that his faults, in respect of this last-mentioned division of his subject, afford the reason why he is so little read and liked in France. But why Mr. Schlegel, who has devoted great pains and research to his inquiry into the merits of the French drama, who appears to have been conversant with it during the greater part of his life, and who is probably as much master of the French language as of German; why he, who is right in his judgment as to the general principles of dramatic excellence, and in his application of them to the antique and to other theatres, why he should be grossly and solely in error when he comes to direct his talents, his knowledge, and his taste to the French theatre, it is not for me even to surmise: the fact must be allowed to rest on the strong foundation of a Frenchman's assertion. I feel, however, that it is

not for me to assume such privileges; and I frankly own that if Voltaire, or even La Harpe, in any of their quotations from French plays, should be found describing a passage as full of beauty and elegance, which to me appeared disgustingly coarse and absurd, instead of revelling in a triumph over them, I should consider myself incapable, for some cause or other, of appreciating, or even comprehending French poetry, and would shut myself up in silence on the subject. Where so great and unaccountable a difference of opinion exists, every probability is on the side of the native; just as every probability is against him when foreigners perceive and acknowledge the merits that fall within his avowed and defined system of excellence, but maintain that these must be, from the very nature of that system, but second-rate and incomplete; a charge, which he can only oppose by denying the natural tendencies of things, and putting himself in the situation which I have noticed as untenable. This, however, Frenchmen in general have no scruple to do: they tell you that, as a foreigner, you are callous to the beauties of

their literature; and then they smile at your stupid partiality for your own, the extravagance of which, they, as foreigners, deem themselves competent to correct and chastise.

I cannot, however, as I have said, take the same latitude of privilege: I am withheld from so doing by a certain sense of the ridiculous, which, on several accounts, I am led to think exists more actively, and is diffused more generally, on one side of the channel than on the other. I have, therefore, been anxious to extract from French literature itself, some general authorities and proofs, to the whole unfrittered signification of which I might bind myself, for the purpose of trying whether there was at least consistency and meaning in my views, or whether they were nothing better than the capricious and versatile suggestions of prejudiced vanity. I have imagined that I have found such authorities, both in the attendant circumstances of what I oppose; and more gratefully, in the complete import of the testimonies of those witnesses whose evidence, were it against me, I could not impugn

without doing violence to my feelings of respect for their great merits, and being guilty of the arrogance of rejecting, in my own favour, the authorities to which, on other points, I would gladly appeal. I cannot adduce a more gratifying instance of this flattering coincidence, than the compositions and sentiments of Fontaine. It appears he totally differed in taste as well as in practice, from the "fine writers," his contemporaries. I can see certain generic differences between them; but these, perhaps, will admit of disputation. Fontaine, for instance, is so totally unconscious of himself, as to cause even his readers to lose all thought of the author in his subject; while the "fine writers" never forget themselves, but are always endeavouring to display themselves to advantage on the top of their subject. This, however, as I have said, is taking debateable ground. What cannot, however, be debated, are the facts which he and those who knew him have recorded. His eulogist informs us that he was delighted with the pastoral images in D'Urfé. La Harpe, in his remarks on the ancient pastoral, says, that there is no

species of poetry in greater discredit amongst the French; and the Abbé de Lille expresses his regret that the "false delicacy, and unfortunate prejudices" of his countrymen, should have prescribed the style suited to the pastoral. This observation in favour of the superior purity, benevolence, and sincerity of Fontaine's disposition, leads me to caution any one from imagining that he is to be considered as a mere writer of pleasantries in verse. He is full of the truest touches of pathos, and of exquisitely gentle, chaste, and moving descriptions of nature's quiet and tender beauties. Nothing can be more delightful than to find him displaying a discernment and sensibility that place him at an immeasureable height above the standard judgments of French criticism, while in a modest and unaffected way he is confessing to certain peculiarities of character, which he is contented his contemporaries should represent as limiting him to an inferior order of literature, but from which, at the same time, he is not to be seduced by the authority of the academy, or the seductions of splendid success. He seems very willing that his companions should

under-rate his style as much as they pleased; he does not the less shrink from entrusting his fame to it. In the shape of apologies for himself, he is perpetually discovering a true feeling for the highest beauties and powers of composition; and I rejoice to be able to add, a thorough recognition of all those principles on which I pronounce French criticism to be false, the poetry it praises to be of an inferior kind, and its denial of the superiority of the early European writers to be a heresy. He does not wish, he says, to deprive the fine authors of his day of their popularity, and of the praise due to "le beau tours de vers, le beau langage, la justesse, les bonnes rimes," but he scruples not to avow his own preference of the barbarous elder writers of his country, such as Marot and St. Gelais, whose merits, in spite of the fashion of the time, he cannot consider eclipsed by the brilliancy of the siecle of Louis Quatorze. He proceeds, he says, sometimes by one road and sometimes by another, but he "always travels most surely when he follows the steps of the old poets." In this respect, then, Fontaine affords me a remarkable support, and

presents a striking contrast to what I have noticed as one of the most objectionable features in French criticism. He had evidently a voluptuous enjoyment of the fine, old, mellow, racy, and rich strain of natural writing. He looked for the treasures of literature deep in the mines of native genius, and was very careless of the clipped and hammered currency of the academy, made up of conventional tokens, and doubtful imitations. In his opinion "le secret de plaire ne consiste pas toujours en l'ajustement, — ni meme en la regularité. *Combien voyons-nous de ces beautes régulières qui ne touchent point, et dont personne n'est amoureux !*" In all humility, he ventures to hope that "des vers qui enjambent" may be pardoned him; for they cannot, in his way of writing, be avoided without making *des detours et des recits aussi froids que beaux*, without submitting to *contraintes fort inutiles*, and, neglecting "le plaisir du *cœur*, pour travailler à la satisfaction de *l'oreille*." How neatly expressed is this severe condemnation of that style of frigid and superficial declamation, which he saw praised and flourishing around him, and

which constitutes what the French deem the pride of their literature? In this style "aussi froid que beau," the sallies of passion are adjusted to a certain order, and confined within prescribed limits, in the same way as the Lord Chamberlain directs, before a court birth-day, how the horses' heads shall stand, where the carriages shall approach the palace, and how they shall return to their homes. The verses "qui enjambent," are those which run the sense from one line into another, in the free manner of our masters of English versification, instead of monotonously and laboriously shutting up a clause with each rhyme, as was the fashion with a very inferior school. The evils that attend the servility of the latter practice, Fontaine has the delicacy to apply only to his own "genre" of poetry; but they alike result from it, whatever may be the species of composition. Delille, and one or two of the latest French writers, have the merit of daring occasionally to introduce verses "qui enjambent" into serious poetry; but the French critics still loudly protest against

the licence *: it is sufficient to make them overlook any degree of elegance, tenderness, energy, or pathos, contained in the thought. Surely this proves the sad cowardice of their tastes, and the extreme backwardness of their knowledge. Their admiration is of that childish and feeble kind which feasts itself on beauties that are "ornamental rather than necessary; which have often been attained by persons who have had no poetical turn whatsoever, and as often neglected by those whose genius and productions have placed them in the first rank in the province of poetry." — *Lord Holland's Life of Lope de Vega.* Fontaine could not confine himself within the narrowness of their system. He saw that it mistook handicraft dexterity for the soul of intellectual art: he discerned its real meanness and poverty, in the midst of its boasts of being noble and rich. He felt that it

* M. Chenier is afraid that such liberties must hurt the "general harmony" of the piece in which they are introduced. Malherbe, he says, banished them from French verse; Racine constantly observed the rule laid down by Malherbe; and Boileau consecrates it as "*un perfectionnement remarquable.*"

elevated the "leather and prunella" above genuine worth; that its attractions addressed themselves chiefly to commonplace minds, and the inferior qualities of character, — to those dispositions that are scrupulous because they are infirm, and cautious because they are ignorant; while, in the same proportion, and for the same reasons, it was calculated to disgust the manliness of large and generous natures. It is impossible to open a page of standard French criticism, without finding a proof that we do not calumniate it. Boileau, for instance, lays it down as a maxim, that "one would *rather tolerate, generally speaking, a low or common thought, expressed in noble words, than a noble thought expressed in mean language.*" This is in the teeth of Cicero's doctrine, that "nature without instruction is more powerful than instruction without nature;" but, on the other hand, it coincides with the clown's opinion, that the beef-eater is grander than his majesty. Boileau's preference is a misplaced one: it should just be reversed. It opens a prolific source of offensive cant, inflation, affectation, tinsel, frigidity, and vulgarity. Moreover, it lets

us into the weakest side of the French character generally, including manners and politics, as well as literature. As noble words are within the reach of persons who have no more command over noble thoughts than Owen Glendower had over the spirits of the Red Sea, the maxim in question furnishes an ample authority to pretenders: like the diplomas of some of the Scotch colleges, it furnishes a professional authority to quackery and stupidity. Noble thoughts have a permanent and universal value in themselves; the fashions of language exist, change, and pass away, according to the accidental and fleeting circumstances of society. It is the lowest and most sordid natures that are usually the most fastidious as to words, for they connect the greatest number with degrading and disgusting images. Swift felt this when he affirmed, that a nice man was a man of nasty ideas; and a recollection of the truth will help us to account for the admiration of French refinements whenever we happen to meet with it in our country. We have heard of a person's declaring that he could not read the word *beverage* in

poetry without thinking of small-beer. Such an one should live in France, where Boileau specifies, as one of the most remarkable proofs of Racine's genius, that this great poet has once been able to introduce the word *dogs* (chiens) into dramatic verse without shocking the delicacy of a French audience.

Rousseau is another author, belonging to the same nation, whose style is an offering made to nature, in a strong feeling of her divinity. — I have nothing here to do with the abstract justice and moral propriety of his sentiments : — it would almost seem as if his country must do mischief one way or the other: — but to me, I confess, it appears, that Rousseau carried the eloquence of sensibility to the very highest pitch of fervour. In this respect I do not know his equal : his language has an intensity that causes it to pierce to the marrow : — when, with this power, it happens to touch upon a tender part of the reader's mind, — upon some diseased or afflicted sympathy, — the effect is terrible. What a dreadful mirror does the following passage present, to startle, with its own

dark likeness, the soul that has withered under the effects of fatal disappointment or irreparable loss:—

"J'étois jeune encore;—mais ce doux sentiment de jouissance et d'espérance qui vivifie la jeunesse, me quitta pour jamais. Dès-lors l'être sensible fut mort à demi. Je ne vis plus devant moi, que les tristes restes d'une vie insipide. ******** Je venois rechercher le passé qui n'étoit plus,—et qui ne pouvoit renaître!"

This specifies to the consciousness, something,—(a small part)—of what Shakspeare suggests to the imagination in the last burst of Lear's breaking heart:—

——"O thou wilt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!"

If, after being struck with the energy and passionate feeling in Rousseau's writings, we found him plunging with enthusiasm into the deep places of French poetry, and extracting from its properties either a balm for the wounds of his spirit, or a stimulus grateful to the cravings of his restless temperament, we should hide our sensibility to its merits in the secrecy of silent mortification. But we are not placed in this disagreeable predicament. Rousseau's

hand was against French criticism, as its hand was against him. Voltaire, the great champion of what is false and poor in feeling, professed as much contempt for Rousseau, as for the Hebrew Lyrics, the Greek Odes, and English Poetry. And it is thus that Rousseau passes judgment on French dramatic verse:

"Communement tout se passe en beaux dialogues, bien agencés, bien ronflans, où l'on voit d'abord que le premier soin de chaque interlocuteur est toujours celui de briller. Presque tout s'énonce en maximes générales. Quelque agités qu'ils puissent être, ils songent toujours plus au public qu'à eux-mêmes. ********* Il y a encore une certaine dignité maniérée dans le geste et dans le propos, qui ne permet jamais à la passion de parler exactement son langage, ni à l'auteur de revêtir son personage, et de se transporter au lieu de la scène."

Schlegel may be as wrong, in what he says of the French dramatic poetry, as the writer in the "Mercure" affirms he is; but at all events he has only been struck by it as Rousseau was. The following passage, taken from the Lectures, is a repetition, in other words, of what has been given above:

"It is only a certain full-dressed and formal beauty which is incompatible with the greatest truth of expression, and this beauty is exactly that which is demanded

in the style of the French tragedy. The main cause lies in a national feature; in the social endeavour never to forget themselves in presence of others, and always to exhibit themselves to the greatest possible advantage. It has been often remarked, that in French tragedy, the poet is always too easily seen through the discourses of the different personages; that he communicates to them his presence of mind, his cool reflection on their situation, and his desire to shine upon all occasions. When we accurately examine the most of their tragical speeches, we shall find that they are seldom such as would be delivered by persons speaking or acting by themselves without any restraint. We shall generally discover something in them which betrays a reference more or less perceptible to the spectator. Before, however, our compassion can be powerfully excited, we must be familiar with the characters. But how is this possible, if we are always to see them yoked to the views and endeavours of the author, or, what is worse, to an unnatural and assumed grandeur of character? We must overhear them in their unguarded moments, when they imagine themselves alone, and throw aside all care and precaution."

Now, such sentiments as these assume the appearance of having been written simply as commentaries on Shakspeare. It is proper that the French critics should be told, that the above quotations from Rousseau and Schlegel, include an enumeration of faults which can the least be overlooked or forgiven in poetry of high pretensions;

for they are all allied to a certain meanness and affectation, the discovery of which destroys, in a moment, the power of the illusion which may have been previously extending itself over the mind of the reader.

The animation which poetry is intended to produce, whether it be of the passions or the imagination, can only be yielded to with a good grace, when the reader is assured of the earnestness of the author, and that the feeling in which each passage was written, went even beyond that which it seeks to excite; the least appearance of artifice strikes enthusiasm to the ground, and occasions a sense of mortification and shame. I repeat, then, that the defects blamed above, are decisive marks of a weak judgment and a vulgar taste; for they consist, not in forgetting the smaller decorums in the zeal of a great design, or under the power of an absorbing emotion, but in extending petty forms until they encroach on essential principles, and at length shock even common sense by transgressing the elements of subordination, and reversing the natural order of importance. The title of one of Boileau's chapters on Longinus, is very ap-

plicable here, "en effet, trop s'arrêter aux petites choses, cela gâte tout." A most disagreeable character may be often seen resulting from this error in private life; and in poetry its influence is in the last degree odious. The imperfections of the Italian, Spanish, English, and German poetry, by which the French profess to be shocked, are all of another kind; they all belong to the family of *hardiesses*. The French critics quarrel with the poetry of these other nations, as a timid rider quarrels with a mettlesome horse; while we object to theirs on the same principle that the English sportsman would express his contempt for the amusement which the French court calls hunting, and which consists in cantering down one long avenue and up another. Still we find, in the consistency of their opinions, a corroboration of the justice of ours; and as we have supported ourselves on what La Fontaine approved and enjoyed, so may we derive a cogent confirmation of our sentiments from the disapprobation and ridicule of Voltaire. Bacon says of the ode, that "it strikes the mind as it were with a di-

vine sceptre;" Voltaire is of opinion, that, "as a people becomes enlightened, the ode falls into disgrace on account of its *exaggerations.*" Milton extols "those frequent songs throughout the Law and the Prophets; which, in the very critical art of composition, may easily be made appear to be over all other kinds of lyric poetry incomparable." The Psalms and the Prophets are described by Voltaire as made up of "galamatias;" of mere absurdity, and rank fustian. He thinks the English style is "trop copié des écrivains Hebreux;" but on one occasion we find him letting a suspicion escape, that this style may perhaps *elevate the spirit, though by an irregular march.*" What can be more satisfactory than this? What more flattering testimony could we desire? One of our living poets has noticed the influence of the old English translation of the Scriptures, committed as it is to every body's hands, on the public taste. It is probably to this, more than to any thing else, that we are indebted for the force of imagination and habit of contemplation discoverable in the body of our people. The

sublimities of the original have been, amongst all our ranks and classes, the object of daily thought, and their admiration has been trained to the height of this great argument." * Indeed I know of no more certain proof of a small, vain, egotistic, and shallow spirit, than an insensibility to the magnificence that abides within the clouds and shadows of the Hebrew compositions. I am here alluding to them only as a test of *good taste*; in this respect they try all the higher qualities of percep-

* The style of the period when the translation in common use was made, has preserved more of the energy and character of the original than could have been hoped for from modern hands. Indeed, nothing can be more remarkable than the superiority of our early translations, in the way of conveying the spirit of a foreign work. As Ben Jonson says in behalf of the English edition of Guzman d'Alfarache, which fully confirms our favourable testimony,

——"then it chimes
When the old words do strike on the new times;"

And it would seem that old words are best suited to do this. Cotton's translation of Montaigne is another proof of what we have been affirming. The task of translation had not then been consigned to mere dunces. It was thought that

"Books deserve translators of like coat,
As was the genius wherewith they were wrote."

tion and feeling. He must be prepared to take a flight above the most attractive sensualities, who will follow their mysterious course. He must look out far beyond himself, for his chief pride and his choicest gratifications, who would enjoy their grandeur. Voltaire was totally destitute of that quality of magnanimity which is necessary to elevate the comprehension to the height of the noblest beauties; there never was a man that had less of the romantic in his disposition; he had not dignity enough in his consciousness of the things about him, to perceive the value of that wise neglect, by which, as Burke finely says, "generous nature is permitted to choose her own road to perfection." This writer, or *philosopher* as he is called, had for his principal faculty, and must be contented to have for his chief fame, the power of degrading the value of things: whatever passed through his hands came deteriorated from them. His talent was "de dire bassement toutes les choses." Even when his arguments are ranged on the side of truth and virtue, the way in which they are constituted, and the manner in which they are urged, invite to a light in-

difference in regard to both. He leads to those low conceptions of the human character and destiny, which form the best excuse for systematic profligacy of conduct; and his general tone is tinctured with that levity in regard to the integrity of means, which can only discredit worthy ends, and promote the triumph of the worst. He belongs to the class which he describes as "les gens qui ne regardent jamais les choses les plus serieuses, que comme l'occasion de dire un bon mot;" who put us irresistibly in mind of the monkey tribe, that are always grinning in their deformity, and cause their spectators to laugh in contempt and shame, as it were of their very selves. It is a pitiable event when the great interests of society, the name of philosophy, and the reputation of improvement, fall all under the influence of this vain, pert, and shallow-hearted race. We are not wholly without the school in England; its disciples are persons with whom self-sufficiency is the moving principle. All their qualities, particularly those which do them the most service, will be found directly opposed to magnanimity. Even their style is small,

sharp, trifling, and affected; it is described in the censure that has been passed against that of a Roman author, considered by some to belong to the family in question; "he makes a pass with a pin, but with the flourish of a fencing-master; and, when he pricks, fancies that he has mortally pierced."

I am led, then, to place some confidence in my own judgment on French poetry, first, by observing what is most to the taste of the French authors for whom we have the highest respect, and whose genius is indisputable; and secondly, by looking at the works which are neglected, condemned, or despised, by those French critics and writers, who chiefly exemplify what we consider the errors of the French style. Another mode of checking my sentiments, is suggested by the boast, which is in every Frenchman's mouth, and which is dispersed throughout almost the whole of their publications; that their literature generally, and particularly their poetry, is acknowledged by all the nations of Europe, except England, to be excellent above every other. The superior talent of their writers, and the superior beauty of their style, they

consider as great luminous truths, flashing conviction, and dazzling the universal view. Voltaire says, "Il est vrai que l'Angleterre a, d'Europe contre elle, en ce point." La Harpe abounds with similar assertions; and he traces the unequalled reputation of French poetry, to its improvement on the acknowledged merits of the antique. If all this were true; if there existed a broad and encompassing line of affinity between the effusions of French talent, and the natural feelings of mankind, in the various kingdoms of Europe, with the single exception of our own; and if this modern testimony were sanctioned by the connection of its object with the remains of antique genius; a connection originating in a feeling of veneration for the glory of other times, and of dissent from the buz of the moment, when it is raised against the silent past; if this were the case, as it is pretended to be, my opinion would be strongly suspected even by myself. But if the facts are quite otherwise, I have a right to claim the benefit of the directly opposite conclusion. If the French style of poetry is disowned by the strongest native spirits in every

country; if it has no support in any but in the tastes of those who have formed themselves according to an artificial and unmeaning standard of manners, which destroys all real features of character, whether individual or public; if French criticism alone permits itself to exercise offensive and absurd outrages against all the great reputations both of the ancient world, and of the early modern times; setting up against the prescriptive honours of ages, its own high opinion of itself, and the all-sufficiency of Richelieu's academy! if this should turn out, as I suspect it will, to be the right way of putting the case, I certainly shall not profess any diffidence of myself, in pressing a disagreement with our neighbours that has so many supports untainted with the weakness of self-partiality. Now, then, for the facts. I apprehend that it is simply a matter of observation, that the admired early Italian writers, are, in what may be termed the spirit of their style, in their

* Warton notices the effect of "the tacit compacts of fashion which promote civility by diffusing habits of uniformity, and thus destroy peculiarities of character and situation."

mode of looking at natural objects, and their feeling of what chiefly communicates lively and intense impressions, much more akin to the barbarous English writers of the times of Elizabeth, James, and Charles I., than to the polished French, of the age of Louis XIV. But, supposing this should be disputed, it cannot be controverted that, in English literature, more than in French, are to be found the signs of an enthusiastic admiration of those great men, who shone in the morning splendour of art and letters; and that English criticism is always at least respectful towards the Italian poets; while the French critics seldom or never praise them, but to insult them by placing certain alleged absurdities against their merits, and some Frenchman's production above them. Compare, for instance, La Harpe's notice of Dante with Warton's in his History of Poetry; and observe the rich reflection of Italian grace and sublimity in Milton! The latter brought from his pilgrimage, to what he deemed the land of poetry, a feeling of what was due to an emulation of its genius, very different from that which seems to

have influenced Voltaire, in the work which M. Chenier considers as at least equalling "Ariosto."* Lord Holland's account of the two principal Spanish dramatists sufficiently manifests that the Spanish muse has nothing in common with the French Academy; and the taste of the nation, as is truly stated by Schlegel, has of late years retaken a strong tendency in favour of the national literature; in recovering from the momentary ascendancy of a French school; a circumstance that sometimes occurs in all countries, for reasons that have been before explained. As to Germany, France cannot boast of any very flattering testimony from that nation of affected but original thinkers. The work of Schlegel on Dramatic Literature, with all its blemishes, triumphs over French criticism by its superiority of execution, while it conveys the bitterest condemnation of the leading principles and chief examples of French poetry. It is im-

* Considering how Frenchmen ought to feel in regard to the female whose name Voltaire has attached to his unnatural obscenity, we view "La Pucelle" as the most infamous work that disgraces the literature of any period or language. Its chief feature is unmanliness.

possible to imagine a more striking contrast to the critical labours of Voltaire, Marmontel, La Harpe, Palissot, Chenier, &c. than the German work. It is distinguished by a strong feeling for distinct and peculiar traits; the Frenchmen are anxious to lose all these in a standard splendour and polish: it uses imagination as a powerful ally of discernment; the Frenchmen oppose the two to each other: it spreads itself out over the height, depth, and width, of human nature; the Frenchmen entrench themselves within the narrow limits of their own modes and opinions. Schlegel informs us, that the public taste in Germany has been so decidedly declared against French tragedies, that there is no longer cause to fear any illusion from that quarter.

So much for the general suffrage of the continent in favour of French poetry; let us now examine what support it can derive from the acknowledged excellence of the antique. It is at least very evident that the antique owes nothing to French criticism. Fontenelle says of Æschylus that he was *mad!* He affirms that it would evince a want of reason not to acknowledge how in-

finitely the French theatre is above the Greek. The same Frenchman remarks, of Virgil's sixth book of the Æneid, that he could not have recovered from a drunken fit when he composed it; it is so full of absurdities. This insolence Dryden chastises, showing that it proceeds from a national disposition to make their own age and country the rule and standard of others, and themselves the measure of all. The Greek theatre, one of their writers declares, had all the monstrosities of the English. The intervention of supernatural agency, so calculated to produce grand theatrical effect, and at the same time so authorized by the feelings and traditions of mankind at large, is prohibited by the strict rules of French criticism: in this respect they deem the Greeks barbarous, and the English, of course, no better. It is the same with regard to the introduction of mental derangement on the stage. The ancients frequently adopted this great mean of striking terror and pity into the breasts of the audience. The furies of Æschylus are personifications of distraction and remorse; they are the deities and dispensers of madness. The poet has impressed

them upon the imagination as shadowy, dishevelled forms; at one moment sunk in an awful sleep, representing exhausted frenzy; and, in an instant, rousing themselves with cries, waving their hissing serpents in the air; fleeing, like misty vapours, after their victim; fiercely demanding him as their prey in the teeth of trembling gods, and seizing him in their fangs, as he clings with shrieks to the feet of Apollo! La Harpe objects, however, to these terrible creations, because they snore on the stage, which he thinks shameful; Brumoy, with all his inclination to praise the Greeks, had previously found himself incommoded with their "ronflemens;" and Voltaire, if I recollect rightly, has his joke on the occasion. The latter states that the ancient drama hazarded spectacles of death and suffering not less revolting than what one meets with on the English stage; and on the chorusses he has no mercy. Yet, every now and then, as Schlegel justly remarks, "he spoke with enthusiasm of the Greeks, that on other *occasions, he might rank them below the more modern masters of his own nation, including himself.*" This is the secret of all that is to

be found favourable to the ancients in French criticism: they praise the "Phedra" of Euripides; but it is to increase our admiration for that of Racine, which is ranked far above the Greek production. We agree with Potter, the translator, though perhaps we might express ourselves rather more strongly, that Racine's "Phedra" is not the "Phedra" of Euripides, and that, "though the amiable and gallant Hippolyte of the French author forms a very pleasing and interesting character*, yet we are sorry to lose the severe, unyielding Hippolytus of the Greek poet." Nothing can be more nationally characteristic than the servility with which the French adhere to the dry dead-letter of the critical rules of the ancients, while they give themselves the most offensive licence to ridicule and insult

* Dryden says, "Where the poet ought to have preserved the character as it was delivered to us by antiquity, when he should have given to us the picture of a rough young man, of the Amazonian strain, a jolly huntsman, and, both by his profession and his early rising, a mortal enemy to love, he has chosen to give him a turn of gallantry, sent him to travel from Athens to Paris, taught him to make love, and transformed the Hippolytus of Euripides into *Monsieur Hippolyte*."

the spirit of ancient poetry; that heavenly power, from which criticism was content to take its laws, and by the splendour of which it was alone enabled to reflect light on the world. It was not in their rules that the ancients found their poetry: it was from their poetry that they took their rules. The meanness, coupled with the arrogance, in this habit of the French critics, forms a compound as revolting as singular. We have acted very differently; we have carried our veneration upward to the immortal soul that animated the body that was so beautiful, leaving the mere skeleton for the exclusive use of those whose taste leads them to prefer the servile imitation of mechanism to the independent emulation of intellect. La Harpe's book and Schlegel's are strongly contrasted on the merits of the ancient poets. The German strips himself entirely of modern habits, and all the weights and hindrances formed of modern associations; he then plunges into the subject with devoted enthusiasm, as into a mighty stream which is to carry him to a land whose lofty shores gleam upon the sight from the other side of the dark gulph of,

time. He goes to seek and to admire, not the conveniences, the gratifications, the proprieties, to which he is most accustomed, — but antique peculiarities, the impressions of an early age, the signs of primitive manners, pictures of our common nature, influenced by circumstances of climate, religion, politics, and history, the most dissimilar that can be imagined from those of our day. The Frenchman sacrifices all these complexional differences as barbarous and bad: he offers them up as victims at the shrine of offended national fashion, and calls upon the ladies and gentlemen, his hearers at the Lycée, to contemplate, with astonishment, how much more genteel they are than the Greeks! He ridicules that glorious religious rhapsody, the "Bacchæ" of Euripides, which burns with the Greek fire even in the English translation: he cannot follow the steps of the god, who,

"—— Waving in his hand
The torch that from his hallow'd wand
Flames high, his roving Bacchæ leads,
And, shouting as he nimbly treads,
Flings to the wanton wind his streaming hair!"

The enthusiasm of this piece works itself onward with a still increasing velocity, un-

til, at last, it seems to set the earth, the seas, the heavens themselves in motion, and we hear

"The proud wife of Jove in triumph dance,
Shaking the pavement of the Olympian house."

The French tell us that they alone have caught the mantle of the Greeks! What they would palm upon us for all this is a mere Parisian scarf; something like Catherine's gown, of which Petruchio exclaimed in indignation,—

"Here's snip, and nip, and cut, and slish, and slash;
Like to a censer in a barber's shop!"

Kate, however, was of opinion that she never saw a better fashioned thing,—"more quaint, more pleasing, more commendable."

None can truly admire the antique, who do not admire it for its own sake, without any felonious thought of carrying off its mighty remains to erect a modern palace out of them. The French would do worse than this: from its mutilated fragments they would fain steal materials to build a hall of sitting for their own Academy, and, on the strength of the mischief thus done, summon us to recognize Plato in Voltaire,

and Aristotle in La Harpe. I cannot, however, submit to this. The misery is, that the French cannot be taught the difference between first and second hand: they cannot be made to see, because they cannot be made to feel, that what was native and genuine in Athens in the time of Pericles, can only be affected and counterfeited in Paris in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, or Buonaparte. So far as the animation that springs from self-applause and social encouragement can give the power of production, the French may boast of what they have accomplished: there is nothing that they will not try to do, and, in their own opinion, they succeed in all they try. There is some ground for their self-flattery in this respect: they imitate excellently all that can be imitated; they fashion off the dead and empty form to a nicety; they even improve the regularity of its proportions, and place a more obvious simper upon the countenance. If the sacred fire were to be stolen now, as it was of yore, the manufacture would be wanting in nothing; but the gods have been on their guard against such thefts. In love with their own work-

manship, the French are more easily contented than Pygmalion; they do not fret themselves if the animating soul be deficient. Being endowed with this skill and self-complacency, they have been denied an insight into the deep and secret springs, from whence proceeds that stream of endless renovation and variety, that sparkles over the face of the world. In the ceaseless revolutions of human affairs, genius takes new shapes, as it is, from time to time, cast in fresh moulds. A provision is thus made for the immortality of fame. The excellence that has once existed can never be hidden from our sight by what may come afterwards. It remains distinct and pre-eminent on its own ground; to be compared with what you please, but to be confounded with nothing else. We can turn no where to enjoy what we have lost, but to the remembrance of itself; and there is much that is assuring and comforting in this consideration. Life is indeed frail and fleeting; but to the sadness of its uncertainty is not added the disgrace of its being transferrable. The French do not seem to be open to these reflections: their

revolution was to intercept the view of the past altogether, and to leave future generations only to wonder how the race could have existed amidst the misery and ignorance which hung over the world before that reviving and enlightening era! Voltaire considered the Odes of Pindar, the Lyrics of David, the Lamentations of Job, and the glowing annunciations of Isaiah, as quite obliterated from the existing world by the correctness of French verse, and the dignity of French tragedy. La Harpe affirms, that the Achilles of Racine is even more Homeric than that of Euripides! "What shall we say to this?" exclaims Schlegel: "Before acquiescing in the sentences of such critics, we must forget the Greeks." This, however, they think may be done without regret. Fontenelle, in one of his poems, has a line which affirms that the glory of Paris is a sufficient consolation for the decay of Athens. And this may be so to Frenchmen. Paris may be much superior to any thing that Athens ever was: on such a question of taste, each person will decide for himself; but, as it cannot be

exactly what, and where, Athens was, it cannot fill the place of Athens. Nature,

> Which form'd the various scene
> Of rage and calm, of frost and fire,

has appetites too strong to limit her attachments, as the French would represent. The seraglio of her beauties is full of all complexions, shapes, and humours: she only demands passion and feeling; hence nothing is excluded from her favour but the Platonic *beau-ideal*, which is left to be the insipid mistress of the French Academy.

If I was called upon to specify in a word the general amount of all this poverty and perversion, I would say that it resolves itself into *a want of imagination*. It is this want which chiefly characterizes French composition and French criticism. Take, for instance, Gil Blas, an admirable work in its way, and observe how little the imaginative power is shown in it compared with Don Quixote. Feeling themselves, however, to be gay and volatile, and finding themselves accused of being capricious and inconstant, the French deem that they are distinguished by an excess of imagination.

They do not know that it is a faculty far more contemplative than active, more melancholy than mirthful, more resigned than impatient. Their philosophical politicians would never have attempted so much in the way of improvement, if they had been gifted with imagination to conceive the height and beauty of perfection; they would never have been so presumptuous as to the immediate condition of man, if their imagination had been strong enough to enter on the mysteries of his destiny. Their poets would not be so arrogant in a conviction of the strength and efficacy of a few scholastic rules, if they possessed imagination like Milton's, that could "soar above the wheeling poles," and overlook the immense complexity of the machinery of the universe. But of all the deficiencies which it is possible to lay to their charge, a Frenchman will probably be least prepared to expect that his countrymen should be accused of the one which we have mentioned. One of their writers lately expressed his indignant surprise, that France should not have produced, for some time, any strikingly good novels or poems, and that she

should content herself to translate from the English? He is prepared to assign any reason rather than want of talent amongst others; he mentions the *earnestness of political thinking* amongst the French people, insinuating, we presume, that the English are very indifferent to politics, and have therefore leisure to write novels and poems! At all events, he says, it is well known that the French are *not wanting in imagination.* I affirm that they are, and I shall note some circumstances which, I think, will be found to support my assertion. M. Cabanis, a late French writer on metaphysical subjects, states, in his introduction, that the French tongue *is poor in words that are necessary to the display of the imaginative faculty:* it is, on the other hand, he says, rich in all that assists the neat and concise delivery of facts, and the clear developement of logical or scientific reasoning. Now, I apprehend, that to say of a national tongue that it is deficient in the language of imagination, is to say of the people using it, that they are not superabundantly endowed with the faculty; for where the latter exists it will give a colouring, a scope, and associ-

ations to words, that will fit them for its use. Further, the remark of M. Cabanis throws considerable light on one of the principles of French criticism. Being poor in the language of imagination at home, it can not understand that language abroad, and very adroitly sets itself to ridicule what it is not able to appreciate. This furnishes us with a key to all that Voltaire has written against Shakspeare, in the justice of which he believed himself; but I am inclined to think that the greater part of his abuse he knew to be misrepresentation. I find, scattered throughout the French critical publications, many casual remarks, which all tend to prove that the national character is scantily furnished with this most sublime and distinctive prerogative of the human spirit. "We are a nation," says Voltaire, in his letter to Bolingbroke, "accustomed to turn into ridicule every thing that is not of common usage amongst us." Can a more miserable or mean character be imagined! "If one of our authors were to hazard on our stage," says he, "that fine incident in Addison's Cato, where the father receives the dead body of his son in a manner wor-

thy of an old Roman, our pit would laugh, and our ladies would turn away their heads." That is to say, it would be ridiculed, as an incident not of daily usage in Paris. The same writer states, that the French will tolerate nothing that stands in need of an *excuse*. From what I have just quoted, it appears, that they deem every thing in need of an excuse which is not part of their own fashions; so that if any thing excellent should happen to fall without this mark, it cannot be tolerated! Schlegel observes, that the French boast of their *impatience* as a proof of quick apprehension and sharpness of wit: "It is, however, susceptible of another interpretation: superficial knowledge, and more especially an inward emptiness of mind, always display themselves in fretful impatience." La Harpe, in accounting for the neglect of pastoral poetry amongst the French, says, it is necessary to read the Idylls of Theocritus with the feelings of a Sicilian peasant, and this he considers it utterly impossible for a Frenchman to do. This impossibility is to be traced to the want of imagination;—a deficiency which characterises the whole sys-

tem of social manners in France, particularly that part of it which relates to women. A Frenchman, it would appear, on the testimony of his own authors, has but little of that noble faculty which outlives time and overleaps distance;—which renders the individual co-eval and co-extensive with his race; a partaker of all its sympathies; a participator in all its changes; a companion of all nations, tribes, tongues, and periods; gifted with the spirit of the great family of mankind, and existing, not in a wretched confinement to one spot and its fashions, but in all famous places, and at all remarkable eras, and amidst all eventful circumstances. It was Shakspeare's imagination that rendered him all things to all men; it is their want of imagination that causes the French poets to make all their characters Frenchmen; nay, Frenchmen only of the court of Louis the Fourteenth! "Antiquity," says Schlegel, "is merely used by them as a thin veil, under which the modern French character can be distinctly recognized. Racine's Alexander is certainly not the Alexander of History; but, if under this name we imagine to ourselves the great Conde,

the whole will appear tolerably natural. Who does not suppose Louis the Fourteenth and the Duchess de la Valière represented under Titus and Berenice?" It is their want of imagination which makes them believe that "the age of Louis the Fourteenth has left nothing remaining throughout every succession of ages, till the very end of the world, but a passive admiration of its perfections."

Voltaire had not even imagination enough to transport him from the philosophical character of Madame ———, "who hated the Jews," into the most accessible and open part of the female heart, for the purpose of observing one of its most common dispositions. He finds it very ridiculous that Desdemona should be represented as touched to love by a man's story of "moving accidents by flood and field," though it was told in a way to make the duke exclaim,

"I think this tale would win my daughter too."

La Fontaine furnishes us here again with the most pleasant and efficacious means of triumph.

"En peu de temps, Mars *emporta la dame*,
Il la gagna peut-être en lui contant sa flamme:
Peut-être conta-t-il ses siéges, ses combats,
Parla de contrescarpe, et cent autres merveilles,
Que les femmes n'entendent pas,
Et dont pourtant les mots sont doux à leurs oreilles."

The imagination of the reader, when it is duly inspired and impelled by that of the author, leads him to accept, not only willingly, but eagerly; and by anticipation as it were, peculiar turns of expression and marked words, with a full yielding to their force of their import where they stand, as distinct from their vulgar or fashionable signification, conveying perhaps some interesting peculiarity of personal genius, or charged with the transports of a passionate moment. When the author, instead of being fettered to a certain adjudged and prescribed style, which must inevitably, by constant use, become common place; or, instead of being threatened with laughter if he shall derange the toilette-like order of "silken terms precise," and the still more toilette-like arrangement of fashionable ideas, corked up and labelled for occasional use, like so many essence vials and ap-

proved cosmetics; when, instead of being thus confined and intimidated, he can reckon on the kindred enthusiasm of his readers, as well as on their deference and self-suspicion in his favour when necessary, he will feel himself in spirits to proceed in a bold freedom, to use all the means of moving and impressing. He can only have the confidence in himself necessary to the production of master-pieces, when he is assured that the aim and endeavour of those who read him will be to follow his ascent to the fresh and breezy eminence, not to keep him down to the level of the streets, or the squares. French criticism, however, will not allow an author to have this necessary confidence. It is not possible to fancy either the existence, or the popularity, of the best pieces of Burns in France. But if we think of Spain, Italy, or Germany, nothing suggests itself to render their appearance impracticable in any of these countries. France, by making rules despotic, has destroyed the native sovereignty of mind.

It has been said very justly, that fine poetry will always make its own excuse: the composition that cannot do this, is not

worth a justification. If any person doubt this maxim, let him go to see one of David's large pictures, and, if possible, hear the artist illustrate the merit of his own production. He will find that every thing, to the minutest point, has been attended to. A theory is involved in every touch of the pencil, or some incident of history, or trait of character, lurks in every gesture and fold; divine birth is to be discovered in the poising of a spear; patriotic devotion in the cut of the hair; the year of the event, according to the chronological system at present approved by the Institute, in the texture of the drapery. Lastly, all this painful enumeration of matters of fact is so glazed over, and polished up, with the patent varnish of the beau-ideal, that, in the result, we have a beautiful piece of generalization, on whose clear face nothing of magnitude is marked, but at the bottom of which the smallest objects may be discerned! This is, indeed, the triumph of the rules; they will account for every thing, in or about such a picture, even to its badness.

The only rules that are neglected by such

artists are those which nature observes! La Harpe, echoing his master Voltaire, is very careful to stipulate, that nature should not be too closely followed. He says, "Elle est toujours près de nous ; nous n'avons pas besoin des arts pour la trouver." This may be very true ; but not in the sense meant by La Harpe. He is anxious that the difficulties which the artist has surmounted by his dexterity, and the able means by which his triumph has been gained, should be displayed, prominently and constantly before the spectator ; and the reason he gives is highly curious : " pour adoucir les impressions de la tragédie, qui, sans cela, seraient trop fort, et ressembleraient trop à la douleur réelle." Very possibly French sensibility may afford some ground for this excessive caution ; but it must be acknowledged that their stage, with its constrained monotonies, and their actors with their sonorous declamation, form a very good protection against too strong an impression of " la douleur réelle." The same writer, with sufficient consistency, declares himself averse to hearing kings and queens speak " comme mon voisin, et mes voisines, que

j'ai laissé à la maison." It happens, unfortunately, however, that the *Chédreux* style of poetry, as Dryden names it after a famous French perruquier, in proportion as it separates ranks, loses its claims on sympathy in the chasm. When freemasonry, of any description, is put in the place of commonly intelligent communications, the large body of the uninitiated must remain as uninterested as uninformed. La Harpe does not at all improve his argument by saying that tragedy exhibits kings and queens, "not in those indifferent actions of life where all men resemble each other; but in selected moments and interesting situations." This remark only shows his lamentable ignorance of the heart. It is precisely in the indifferent actions of life that men are furthest from resembling each other; that kings and queens speak a language proper to themselves, which is very different from that of our neighbours whom we have left at home. It is in trying and important situations that all secondary and feigned distinctions are lost in the general fellowship of the great family of human nature. It is in *these* that nature vindicates

her authority over all her children alike, and proves to them that there is no escaping from the equal laws of their parent. When the cry went forth in Egypt at midnight, for the first-born slain in every house, the lamentations that came from the palace were not more stately in their sound than those that came from the cottage. The language of highly excited passion is poetry, from whatever mouth it may proceed. Shakspeare knew this well; as what did he not know? The airs and phrases of the levee-room are only of use in lieu of real feelings and pressing occasions; while those first fill up the scene, the eyes and ears may be employed, but the heart can have nothing to do. Set the real elements of humanity in action, and observation becomes sympathy, and sympathy increases to emotion. There is no vulgarity or meanness in this doctrine; it rests on the only true principles of dignity. The degradation lies in the opposite system; in putting small things before great, and petty considerations before regards of the first magnitude. This, as I have had before occasion to observe, our neighbours are too inclined

to do; and hence they have a superabundance of majesty, splendour, and elegance, always in the market to supply the demand. Their grace is not of the "*unbought*" kind; it is their staple commodity. There is no fear of their ever exposing themselves to be drowned, by jumping into the deep to pluck honour from the moon; they can take it at any time from their looking-glasses. They have cut out easy ways by which the broken-winded can ascend to what they call the summits of fame. The great importance which the French attach to patching and mending their language, and the miserable scantiness to which they have reduced it by their meddling, prove, in the first place, how inordinately they overrate trifles, and, secondly, how utterly they spoil what they pamper. "Language and versification," says the German writer whom we have so often quoted, "which, in the classification of dramatic excellence ought to hold a secondary place, are *alone* in France decisive of the fate of a piece." La Harpe fancies that he puts an additional flower in the garland of his country's victory over all competitors,

when he intimates, that "the most indispensable and essential separation between familiar language and that of tragedy, cannot be established but in proportion *as the idiom of a language is purified and ennobled.*" We hear from the French critics, on many occasions, that their writers have succeeded, beyond all others, in separating tragedy from familiar language; and we are unceasingly told of the success that has attended the efforts of their Academy, to purify and ennoble their tongue. The meaning of all this is, that their disposition, before described, has led them to the foppery of selecting and arranging a set of words to dignify sentiments, instead of chiefly trusting to sentiments to dignify words. But the question forcibly suggests itself here; what purifying and ennobling a language means? If to incapacitate two-thirds of a thing, from bearing a part in any honourable employment, or appearing on any great occasion, be to ennoble it generally, the labours of the French to refine and exalt their language have been very successful; but if, on the contrary, ennobling means to extend eligibility, to confer powers, to break impediments, and remove incapacities, the ancients

did, and the English do, illustrate and honour their respective languages much more than the French. To obviate all suspicion of prejudice and partiality on our parts, I shall call La Harpe as our witness. His testimony in regard to the ancients is as follows:

"La nature de leur idiome permettait une foule d'expressions simples et naïves, qui dans le notre seraient basses et populaires. Le poète pouvait donc, tour-a-tour, être très-naturel, sans craindre de paraître bas, et très-sublime sans craindre de paraître enflé. Ainsi, ce double avantage, tiré du langage et des mœurs, l'éloignait aisément de deux écueils dont nous sommes toujours voisins * * * * * * Chez eux, les détails de la vie commune, et de la conversation familière, n'étaient point exclus de la langue poëtique: presque aucun mot n'était pas, lui-même bas et trivial; *ce qui tenait en partie à la constitution républicaine, au grand rôle que jouait le peuple dans le gouvernement, et à son commerce continuel avec ses orateurs.* Un mot n'était pas reputé populaire pour exprimer un usage journalier, et le terme le plus commun pouvait entrer dans le vers le plus pompeux, et dans la figure la plus hardie."

Nothing can be more explicit or intelligible than this; and his evidence is equally clear in regard to his own country.

"Parmi nous, au contraire, *le poète ne jouit pas d'un tiers de l'idiome national; le reste lui est interdit comme indigne de lui. Il n'y a guère pour lui qu'un certain nombre de mots convenus.*"

The result then of the process of refining their language, which has been so long conducted by the Academy and the great geniuses of France, may be summarily stated to consist in having condemned two-thirds of the national idiom as unworthy of use in elegant composition, and limiting the poet, (whose "eye glances from earth to heaven, from heaven to earth") to a certain number of conventionally established words! The most popular part of the language being condemned, it necessarily follows, that the richest, most forcible, and most applicable turns of expression are lost; and, as to the *menagé* remainder, it is as necessary to go through a course of preparation to be able to connect one's sympathies with it at all, as it is to practise right and left to be able to fill a place in a cotillon or a country dance. Even if they had not so cropped and disfigured their language, we could form no very favourable opinion of the manliness of their tastes, from finding them, in all questions of poetical excellence, attaching the first importance to a matter of academical regulation; but our wonder and pity are carried to the greatest height, when we

discover, that all these ill-placed and doting attentions have been lavished, apparently with no other object than to produce rickety imbecility; that they have swaddled the national tongue to as mischievous a purpose as the Chinese women swaddled their feet, forcing natural strength into a crippled smallness, which depraved fashion passes off for elegant, but which deprives its victims alike of the power of graceful exercise and of useful exertion.

The ancients (says La Harpe) could be natural without fearing to appear low, and sublime without seeming inflated; they had few, or no words that were stigmatised as base or mean in themselves; that is to say, they took the liberty to use their words as they wanted them; they trusted them, like their good weapons, to the management of those who handled them. They no more thought of deciding which were to form elegant writing, and to be admired accordingly, than they did of enacting that he who carried a spear should, as a matter of course, kill him who was only armed with a sword. Why have not the French pursued the same manly plan? They say that the

free and vigorous practice of the ancients in regard to their language is to be traced to the respectable political part which was played by the people of Greece and Rome. Did it never strike them that the same cause will generally produce the same effects? The people of England, too, have been accustomed to play an important part with their government. This at least cannot be denied; nor, further, that the institution to which the improvement of the French language is traced, had its origin in the successful design of a minister to increase and continue the political insignificancy of the French people. Here are some curious contrasts and coincidences; particularly as these self-congratulations of the French critics rest on the curtailment and confinement of their native tongue, while the reputation of the ancient writers connects itself with the independence and expansion of theirs! There is no breaking through such a chain of corroboration as this, and I must plainly tell them, that I protest altogether against the competency of a critical tribunal, which, in its constitution, is thus fundamentally connected

with the corruptions, errors, and weaknesses that present to observation the most unpleasant side of human affairs. Sir W. Temple, noticing the fact which all the French writers state, and of which Palissot boasts, namely, that Cardinal Richelieu set up the Academy *to amuse the wits of that age, and divert their attention from raking into his politics and ministry*, adds, that it was this body which brought into vogue that attention to the smoothness and art of language, which, in our respectable countryman's opinion, marks the decline of its spirit and strength. They carried this favourite work, he says, to a point highly prejudicial to the efforts of intellect; for "few things, or none, in the world, will bear too much refining." Our genuine old humourist has hit off this sort of literary refinement exactly, by forming a partnership 'twixt "the poet and the perfumer;" but now I refer to Ben Jonson, I may as well clench the argument by one of his blows that are not to be either parried or sustained: "under specious names, they commit *miracles in art, and treason against nature!*"

I have before said that their want of imagination has given indelible features to their criticism; perhaps their treatment of their national tongue is but another proof of this deficiency, but at all events their system in regard to their language may be considered as a sort of mould, in which their general critical judgment is set to a small and insufficient size, which renders it incapable of being fitted to any of the finest examples of intellectual beauty and strength. I have already hinted the opinion of M. Cabanis; I shall now quote his testimony: the French language, he says, appears more proper for philosophical discussion, "que capable d'agiter fortement et profondement les imaginations, et de produire tout-à-coup sur les grandes assemblées ces impressions violentes dont les exemples n'étaient pas rare chez les anciens." What right, then, have they, whose knowledge has few or no means but what this unfortunate language affords, and whose minds and tastes are shown in this insufficient and weak medium as in a mirror, what right have they to seat themselves in judgment on points which are thus confessedly above

their reach, and altogether beyond their capacities? How should that nation relish the wonders of the reserved muse, that "more illustrious magnitude of things," that "more perfect goodness and beautiful variety," whose men laugh, and whose women toss their heads, at every thing which does not present an image of their own fashions, and furnish them with a glass in which they may admire how nicely they sit upon themselves? Again, how should true poetry, the very elements of whose power are the universality of human passion, the dignity of natural feeling, the worth and import of individual character, be appreciated by critics, whose standard of excellence is formed according to certain principles of exclusion or dictation, which are calculated to starve or to stifle the struggling births of genius? It was by this grovelling standard, and with these impotent means, that Perrault tried the ancient poets, and that Voltaire has since tried the English and the Italian. Boileau has well ridiculed the former, whose talent, he says, was to turn every thing to meanness; and has justly reprobated the weak arrogance of

pronouncing on compositions, that were conceived and executed in a noble strength and liberty, by the rules of a language, which, as he says, "is *capricious* above all others in words, and also very *poor* in many important respects." "Voilà, Monsieur, la manière d'agir ordinaire des demi-critiques: de ces gens, dis-je, qui sous l'ombre d'un sens commun, *tourné pourtant a leur mode*, pretendent avoir droit de juger souverainement de toutes choses." Nothing can be better than this; and it warrants us to ask what is meant by the "perfectionnement" of the language, on which Boileau sets so much store? But one is never sure of French critics. From off the back of their most humiliating confessions, they leap to the most offensive boasts. Thus Voltaire says to an Englishman, "Je regrettais cette heureuse liberté que vous avez d'écrire vos tragédies en vers non rimés;" while in another part of his works he has the silly effrontery to maintain, in a fit of spleen against Milton, that blank verse is *as easily written as a common letter!** What more severe can be said,

* Among our Magazine Poets ten thousand catch the structure of Pope's versification for one who approaches the manner of Milton or Thomson." DUGALD STEWART.

both against their faculties and their language, than what they say themselves, that they are obliged to use rhyme, even in the species of poetical composition least adapted for it, as the only distinction in French between poetry and prose! It may be true that this deplorable necessity exists; but, whatever they may do to please themselves, amongst themselves, I cannot permit them to exercise, to the injury and offence of all the world but France, what one of their writers says is their national habit, of converting their necessities into virtues, and their deficiencies into attainments.

Two circumstances may be particularly specified, among the immense number and variety that always go to the formation of national character, as principal sources of the heresies of the literary system which I have been occupied in examining and exposing. The first of these is, the predominant voice and despotic power, which the thing called *society* has always possessed and exercised in France, relative to matters the progress of which in other countries it has followed, not led. It is only this mischievous influence that could induce poets

to consider "politeness as one of the original and essential ingredients of human nature." (Schlegel.) Or, if the word politeness occasion a dispute, as in its best sense it includes natural grace, I may say that it is only by this mischievous influence they could have been led to sacrifice the genuine graces of nature on the altar of a clumsy idol, improperly called politeness, which is an image of fashionable distortion, and whose high priest Lord Chesterfield was, when he prohibited, in the name of good breeding, blowing the nose and speaking the truth. The character of man, as an individual, is infinitely more amiable than that of the embodied mass, which has a distinct and substantial existence under the name of society. By this I do not mean the *public*: the latter is quite a different body. It abides in all the homes and properties of a country; society is to be found only in the assemblies, theatres, and fashionable places. I can appeal to the honour, to the compassion, to the understanding, to the taste, to the piety of an individual; I can appeal to the understanding, the taste, and even the religion of the

public; society has none of these qualities to a degree that would warrant confidence in them. It is generally restless, envious, malignant, and hard-hearted. Man is often serious, — society is generally frivolous: man sometimes contemplates, — but society dissipates thought. It has often been remarked that companies and corporations will readily do things that each individual in these bodies would be ashamed to do. If the taste of the being, called society, is not always of the very coarsest kind, at least it is seldom fine, and it is perpetually capricious. Negative correctness is its climax of accomplishment. It is easily duped by quackery, while it insolently rejects the claims of merit. It submits itself servilely to the chattering of coxcombs and the saws of pedants; and opposes, with even a vindictive spirit, the independent sentiments of real genius. I speak here of society in its most diseased state, arising from high-feeding and pampering; when no currents of vigorous opinion are permitted to refresh it from more healthy quarters; when it can shut itself up within itself, to revel on its own

effeminacies, and listen to its proper panders, unassailed by the wholesome correctives of popular ridicule and censure. This can never be wholly the case in England, though we have enough of the tendency to the evil to conceive its consequences when it is at its height, which it was in France, from the time that Louis XIV. stripped his kingdom to turn all the French of any note into courtiers of Versailles; for society is always most powerful and arrogant when individual character is least independent and marked. From its influence arises that hateful propensity to heartless and ignorant ridicule, which is the scourge of genius. An appearance of enthusiastic feeling, a word escaping from the overflow of the heart, is capital game for the writers and repeaters of epigrams in society. Hence comes that contempt for every thing that is not of daily usage, which Voltaire notices: hence it is necessary to keep artifice always prominent, "pour adoucir les impressions;" for society is irritable without tenderness, and insolent without zeal.

It is curious to observe at what a very early period this meddling and frivolous

tyranny commenced in France. In the year 1304, Clementina Isaure, Countess of Thoulouse, published an edict, which assembled all the French poets in arbours, dressed with flowers; and he that produced the best poems was rewarded with a violet of gold. During the ceremony, says Warton, *degrees* also were conferred. He who had won a prize three times was created a doctor in *gaye science*. The institution, however fantastic, soon became universal. In latter times the verdicts of society were delivered from the Hôtel de Rambouillet, where a coterie of men and women held their sittings, and pronounced on the claims of all literary productions and candidates. This authority would have hindered, if possible, the performance of Molière's "Femmes Savantes," as an attack on some of their members. La Harpe, in his miserable judgment, says, that the Hôtel Rambouillet (though he cannot subscribe to all the decisions of the ladies and gentlemen) "did good in accustoming people to show cleverness on all subjects." "It is by this," he strangely affirms, "it is necessary to *commence*; one afterwards learns to show

on each subject the species of wit that properly belongs to it." That is to say, it is good to begin by pronouncing on all things, and to learn by degrees to speak common sense on a few! If ever there was a maxim started more calculated to feed the impertinence of half-informed and wholly-confident persons, I have never met with it. From that time, French literature, philosophy, and science, have all lived in the noise of society, and taken their daily aliment and highest encouragement from the saloons. The literary and scandalous memoirs of Bachaumont afford a picture of those close complications of learning and debauchery, wit, foppery, religion, and intrigue, which then formed what may be termed the social surface of France, and which certainly is most interesting as an object of curious examination. The late publications of Grimm assist to complete the representation. Two sects arose on the comparative merits of two sonnets: one called themselves Jobelins, and the other Uranistes. The Prince de Conti was at the head of the Jobelins, and Madame de Longueville was the leader of the Uranistes.

Society quarrelled terribly whether La Fontaine's tale of Joconde, or that of some now nameless and forgotten person, who had also made a version from the original, was the finest. Boileau found it necessary to write a long piece of comparative criticism, maintaining the superiority of Fontaine; and proving that the very dullest and worst productions are not really finer than the most lively and beautiful! Louis Quatorze, we are told, had no taste for La Fontaine; but he felt all the beauties of Racine. This must have been thought a great misfortune for La Fontaine at the time; but who now thinks of it at all?

The other circumstances to which we alluded, as having had a very principal effect in chilling, blighting, and reducing, the spirit and strength of literature in France, *is the formation of the Academy;* an institution which had its rise in slavery, and which has been perpetuated by vanity. The Academy has always been a favourite with the despotic rulers of France, and it has well purchased and deserved their favour, by mean subserviency and fulsome adulation. Louis the Fourteenth and Buo-

naparte have alike found their account in this great corporation, which its best friends must allow has done more for the interests of despotism than it has even done for those of poetry, to say nothing of philosophy, which is a tender subject. Fontenelle, in his history of the Academy, states that the king named and approved the members; the same king that made poor Chapelain, the bad poet, his acting judge of literary merit, and his organ for dispensing rewards to the most approved writers. In consequence of this appointment, there was not a wretched rhymester in France who did not address verses to Chapelain, lauding to the skies himself and his master. Buonaparte, in like manner, knew the value and tendency of such an institution too well not to be very busy in and about it, under its altered name of the Institute.* He de-

* Lacretelle states a curious example of the liberties which Buonaparte was accustomed to take with his Institute; it will suffice to give an idea of what portion of independence and consciousness of dignity could appertain to the authors and savans of France under this system of royal or imperial encouragement of which they are all so proud. The Emperor, who hindered M. Chateaubriant from delivering the usual speech on

creed decenniary prizes to literature, and prohibited M. de Chateaubriant from delivering the usual speech on his introduction as member, because he was informed that it contained allusions which might have a disagreeable political effect. The Institute was always ready to deliver bombast speeches at the foot of his throne when he returned from his wars, but it is not on record that this body, composed of men of letters and science, and forming the selected intellect and knowledge of France, ever made a single effort, or even went the length of hinting a distant allusion, in favour of public liberty, personal independence, national peace, private tranquillity, or domestic security. Yet if these are not the objects of philosophical inquiry and political celebration, what ought to be?

his admission as a member, demanded of the Institute why they had not comprised in their examination of the pieces that might be worthy of the prize, the Genie du Christianisme? He ordered them to make a special report on this work. They did so, and the Emperor received the document, of which from that day to this they never heard a syllable. One knows not how came, or where went this fantasy, says M. Lacretelle.

Lacretelle declares that the spirit of adulation had a great influence over literary men at the epoch of the foundation of the academy, and he regrets the tone of flattery in which it has been accustomed to express itself. It certainly would not seem that he himself furnishes any exception to the degradation which he bemoans, or that amongst the other blessings of the intellectual system established since the revolution, the quashing of parasites, or the silencing of fulsome falsehood, is to be numbered. The author in question has very lately published a collection of detached parts of his works, and it is from this that I have taken the matter of two notes to this article, one on the decenniary prizes, and the other on the report relative to the 'Génie du Christianisme. It may be seen in these how M. Lacretelle treats the "fantastic tyrant, the imperial charlatan;" nevertheless, as he states very coolly, "I praised the dominator then, as it was usual, and as we were commanded. I have preserved these praises, and permitted them to rest by the side of the severe judgments which to-day I pronounce against that extraordinary person,

that they may at once prove and *expiate my part in the common servitude.*" So late as 1812, we find Lacretelle terming Buonaparte the, "*heros législateur*, who with one hand restored altars, and with the other founded the liberty of worship." In the severe judgments of *to-day*, we find it said of the "heros législateur," that, "as legislator he followed the steps of the most vulgar tyrants;" and that with his good fortune, he nourished the natural ferocity of his soul." On the 16th November, 1809, M. le Comte Boissy-d'Anglas, senator and president of the Institute, addressed "Sa Majesté l'Empereur et Roi," at an audience given by the "heros législateur," to the members of that magnanimous body, at which, no doubt, M. Lacretelle was present: "Our historians and poets," said the president, with becoming regard to the dignity of letters, and to the delicacy due to the character of Buonaparte, "will escape oblivion by founding their renown on your Majesty's; they will attach themselves to *your* great name that their *own* may survive. One out of the multitude of your vast actions is sufficient for the

immortality of an individual; nay, for the glory of an age. The greatest difficulty that history will experience will be to render its recitals credible. Your magnanimous disposition is the finest gift which nature can give to genius. It will hereafter be said of you, that *no reverse ever interrupted your memorable triumphs; that fortune, inconstant to all other men, remained faithful to your Majesty*; and that, for the first time, the ingratitude of contemporaries did not display itself to afflict the great man!" Before the 6th of February, 1817, it would seem that some unaccountable jilting had been indulged by his Majesty's faithful fortune, for on that day we find the same most respectable person, M. le Comte Boissy d'Anglas, declaring in the Chamber of Peers, that "*the French love their king, and desire to have their king*, Louis XVIII!" But he had on this occasion certain fears for liberty which it becomes him to express, "that he may be faithful to his principles, and, above all, *consistent with his past conduct.*"

The truth is, that the Academy, or the Institute, or whatever else it may be named,

has been chiefly efficacious in corrupting the simplicity, oppressing the independence, and ridiculing and misrepresenting the originality of true genius: while it has exercised this tyranny, it has pushed forward with a mean zeal the chariot wheels of whatever grotesque or cruel idol formed the authority of the day. An academician feels it to be a chief element of his existence to hold a certain well-defined and indisputable consideration in company: for this purpose, he must be a slave to the radical vices and weaknesses of power and of society, for it is only by this sacrifice he can constitute himself the leader of their temporary tastes. "Academies," it is observed by Schlegel, "always carry with them the dread of the ridiculous, that conscience of poets who write for the world of fashion." Moreover, an academician is encompassed by his own proper competitions and jealousies: what with these, and his obligation and inclination to keep well with the powers that be, and his anxiety to stand conspicuous and approved in the world, we have a host of considerations all claiming and receiving attention before the real in-

terests of literature and learning can be thought of; and when the latter come in competition with the former, we may guess which will be preferred. The facts correspond with the reason of the thing. The founder of the French Academy was the traducer and enemy of Corneille, and procured, as it was to be expected he would, a decision of this body in correspondence with his stupidity or his spite. Le Sage was not of the Academy; La Bruyere, I believe, was ultimately elected; but they kept him out for a long while by their cabals, and they did the same by Boileau. An instance still more in point than any is, that they never elected Molière. All this is easily accounted for; those who become members are instantly plunged into the turmoil of elections, prizes, and bye-laws; and the talent, or claim of any kind that comes in contact with the views of individual intrigue, or corporate ambition, has, as I have before said, but a poor chance. Those who are not members must take their measures to become so as speedily as possible; and these are often incompatible with the boldness, originality, vigour, and

fidelity, that distinguish the career of master-spirits. I happen to know a fact of recent occurrence that fully proves this. One of the most clever experimentalists at this moment in France has entirely omitted in an able work which he has published, on the science to which he has chiefly dedicated his talents, one of its very principal divisions. The reason for this is well understood to be, that handling it would have led him to enforce opinions conflicting with those that are entertained by the person who is at the head of, and who possesses a great interest over, that class of the Institute into which the author aspires to be, and probably soon will be, admitted. This fact is pregnant with instruction as to the influence of academies on the real interests of literature and knowledge.

Thus have I endeavoured to prove the contempt generally entertained and expressed by the French critics for their own early literature; and I have shown that they turn from it in disgust to refresh and delight themselves with the style that became prevalent at a late period.

I have shown that they treat very

hardly all the famous early writers of other countries, including even the ancients: that they are chiefly hard on these by pretending a peculiarly quick feeling for their merits and reputation, arrogating to have received these strictly into their own keeping and peculiar charge; at the same time taking advantage of this pretension to treat them with insults, whenever their native features are found to be at variance with French airs and graces.

It has been repeated from their own statements, that the literature of which they boast, (the distinctive character of which has always been in my view during the course of these remarks) had its origin in an Academical Institution, whose foundation was laid by a crafty political intriguer, to answer a nefarious political design: that this late and tardy birth took place, when manners were on the decline, and in a state the most of all opposed to simplicity of feeling, and personal independence:—that the institution in question has ever since continued to exercise a sovereign influence over the intellectual concerns of France, while it has been itself the servile subject, and even the

instrument of the oppressions, prejudices, desires, dislikes, of despotic and ostentatious governments.

That literary men in France have borne the yoke of a still more degrading and galling slavery, having been summoned, like the Jews in Egypt, to make bricks without materials: that is to say, that they have been confined to the caprices and niceties of pedantry and fashion, when they have been called upon to supply what can only be found "in the spacious circuits of musing," and which, while it is of "highest hope," is also of "hardest attempting."

I have quoted their own testimonies as to the poverty of their language: I have proved by these that it is "capricious above all others in words, and also poor in many important respects;" that it is particularly deficient in expressions that would serve to indicate the exercise of the imaginative faculty; that French poetry is bound to certain "conventional words;" that two-thirds of the national idiom is taken from the poet altogether, so that he cannot bring himself home to the "business and bosoms of men" by the shortest and most certain

ways, but must divert his own enthusiasm and his reader's sympathy from the spirit of his subject, to introduce "holiday and lady terms" that "shine brisk and smell sweet."

These are facts which, I contend, I have placed clear of the suspicion that would attend my own assertions on such points, by a process of inquiry and quotation which the French disdain to follow when they pass judgment on the literature of other nations and periods. They are facts which prove much, and afford strong presumption in favour of all I am inclined to press against the *National System of Composition and Criticism* that belongs to France. In raising my voice against the extravagant assumptions of its interested supporters, I feel that my province is one of higher claims on confidence and good-will than that of the advocate or partizan of any particular sect, country, or era. I am making my stand for all that ages have bequeathed, and that nature offers: I am defending that connection between the past, the present, and the future, which gives a breathing-space to the soul, and something of enlargement to the otherwise

brief and petty existence of the lord of this earth: I am seeking to be delivered from heated disputes, acrid jealousies, and baffling inconstancies; and to receive a certain shelter from them in the all-sufficient extent and according harmony of the wide scene of natural beauty. I must oppose a Frenchman, or any other man, whom I see putting his foot against the motions of the universe, and crying, *halt here, for where I stand is perfection!* I am of opinion that the tide of time bears in its vast bosom treasures of greater value than the cockle-shells that one can pick up about its margin. By separating themselves from their early literature, the French have committed a mortal amputation; they have acted unnaturally, and divested themselves of the sympathies most likely to check or recall them in their wanderings from nature: they have made of their literature an excrescence without a root. In short, the compositions must, in comparison with others, be stinted and cold, which take their character from the combination of circumstances that I have been called upon to specify and describe. Science, I be-

lieve, may often require that assistance which the patronage of power and opulence can alone afford. Painting seeks the large halls of palaces, and the domes of cathedrals, to unfold, in all its extent, the superb scroll of her magical creations: but, even in respect of these, it is the genius of the individual that must be honoured by the encouragements and opportunities which he receives: the former must never be considered as tributary to the accidental ability of holding out the latter; for so to consider, is in fact, to withdraw them in the most cruel and mean way. The superior species of literary composition, in affording a scope for the exercise of the most exalted faculties, have not the same necessities. Literature prostitutes itself if, without these, it seeks the same sphere. Its health and beauty depend on its freedom; and literature can be free only so long as she is true to her own divinity. On this point Voltaire delivers a testimony that is much in favour of our country, but his heart was not sound enough to permit him to do himself credit by the acuteness of his perceptions. He compares English genius to "un arbre

touffu, planté par la nature, jetant au hazard mille rameux, et croissant inégalement avec force:"—he adds, "il meurt si vous voulez forcer sa nature, et le tailler en arbre des jardins de Marli." Long may this continue to be the distinction of English literature, although it may hinder it from being placed as the ornament of a court-lobby on a gala night! Let that which is the offspring of the contrary system, instead of advancing with conscious power and dignity to address the heart, stop to balance and scrutinize words, lest any of them should be consigned to ridicule by the "gens qui rient." It may attempt to be pathetic or sublime, but in the very height of its passion it is liable to be called to order by the insolence of an incompetent authority. Being confined to received turns of expression, it is deprived of one of its most proper and valuable privileges; one which it possesses amongst more free and manly spirits; the prerogative of ennobling with a touch, and conferring an illustrious place for the time to come on what was before common and undistinguished. Instead of ennobling, it must serve; instead of giving riches, it

must receive alms. It may require a servile dexterity, but its rod of divination is broken. It would be proceeded against, according to due course of law, if it were to attempt, with a wizard blow, to draw water from rocks, to call back into life the images of the past, or to turn at will the passions and affections of the human heart. It must not seek to uncover by a stroke the treasures that lie under the common feet unsuspected and unknown, to the discovery of which the regular rules and methods of investigation will never lead. These, I humbly apprehend, are the proper prerogatives of genius; but an academy condemns them, and society laughs them down.

Schlegel, in undertaking to review the three most celebrated French dramatic poets, Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire, says, "Our chief object is an examination of the system of tragic art, practically followed by these poets, and by them partly, *but by the French critics universally, considered as alone entitled to any authority, and every deviation from it regarded as a sin against good taste.*" Here are at once my provocation and justi-

fication in respect of this exposure of the errors, affections, and arrogance of our neighbours. I have chosen to go hand in hand with this German author in my observations on French literature and criticism, because his talent and knowledge afford much assistance on such a subject, and more particularly because his Work furnishes a remarkable refutation of the common assertion in France, that she has the consent of Europe generally, and the example of the world's excellence universally, to sustain her in her controversy with England on literary questions. I flatter myself, however, that this mistake has now been sufficiently exposed to prevent it for the future from keeping itself in countenance by obstinate repetition. I have quoted the opinions of La Harpe frequently in the course of this article, with some sense of reluctance, as if the matter of his sentiments were almost too slight to bear the weight of serious argument: — but I knew not a more fit representative of that shallow, ill-informed, but presuming code of rules, and vanities, which has been

maintained in succession by the most authoritative French critics, — exemplified in practice by their most famous writers, — applied without understanding, as without modesty, to all other literature, ancient or modern, — and which, furthermore, is in general accordance with the national manners, — the style of thinking, speaking, and acting, in France. I wish it, however, to be particularly noticed, that I disclaim to have at all entered upon the discussion of the particular merits of individual authors. If it had been my business here to treat of the particular examples of French composition, instead of the principles of its criticism, I should have had to express my admiration of many striking beauties; but I should have still had to define and limit the class to which these beauties belong. There certainly exists one of an higher order of excellence, to which few of the French writers have raised themselves, and from which it is the task of French criticism to keep them back. Yet the literature of France is distinguished by brilliancy; it possesses noble examples of pathetic and mag-

nanimous declamation, it is superb in its serious march, and light, lively, and gay, to an almost unrivalled degree, in its excursions over the field which society opens for sharp observation and familiar reflection. I can praise to a certain extent all that the French admire: I see their productions distinguished by most of the merits which they describe: I differ from them when they become transported with themselves, and are thus hurried away to affirm that these merits belong to the highest possible order, and that the world beside cannot produce their equals. To support this difference I have quoted their own admissions of their own prejudices and defects; I have proved their incapacity to judge of any thing foreign to their every-day observation and practice; I have shown that they are the unconscious and boasting slaves of impoverishing and degrading authorities. I have not made false or mean translations of the finest passages in their authors: I have not insulted their men of wit and learning, by asserting that they have submitted their judgments to the

coarse taste of the lowest of their mob. If any of us did any of these things, we should render ourselves as offensive and contemptible as the French critics, who have abused Shakspeare on the ground of the incapacities of their own language and the perversions of their own habits; "and who have the foolish effrontery to maintain that Pope, Johnson, Warburton, Akenside, &c. have, in regard to Shakspeare, had their intellects conquered down to an acquiescence with the brutal prejudices and coarse appetites of the hackney-coachmen, porters, butchers, and sailors of London." As a fairly intended compliment to our neighbours, I shall shut up this long tissue of objections against their practice and principles, with a well-expressed sentence taken from their own Boileau, who never attained to write poetry himself, and who had unfortunately imbibed several mean notions in regard to its essentials, but whose various critical observations contain many sentiments of a truly vigorous and sound character: "I could pardon their blunders and their ignorance; but what I cannot pardon is, the insolent

confidence with which they set up their judgment as that of all reasonable persons, and express an affronting amazement that any one should be so infatuated as to disregard their suggestions, or any critic so ignorant as to differ from their opinion."

THE END.

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